“Ṛtvik, yes.”

- Śrīla Prabhupāda

Tattvavit dāsa vs.
Amogh Līlā dāsa

Vol I

“*Ṛtvik*, yes.”

– Śrīla Prabhupāda

Dedication

To
His Divine Grace
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

He lives forever by his divine instructions
&
the follower lives with him.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

Proper Etiquette **1**

CHAPTER TWO

The Question ISKCON Hides **3**

CHAPTER THREE

The May 28, 1977 Conversation Analyzed Properly **6**

CHAPTER FOUR

The July 9, 1977 Directive Is Final **14**

CHAPTER FIVE

The Importance of Śikṣā Gurus **21**

CHAPTER SIX

Sentimentality Condemned **27**

CHAPTER SEVEN
Voted-In Gurus Rejected **31**

CHAPTER EIGHT
Desire ≠ Order **36**

CHAPTER NINE
Nyāya's Para Vidhi In Practice **41**

CHAPTER TEN
Strict Obedience to Guru **48**

CHAPTER ELEVEN
Infertility of Insincere Disciples **51**

CHAPTER TWELVE
The Appointment of Future
Ṛtvik Representatives **57**

CHAPTER THIRTEEN
Disobedience Causes Falldowns **69**

CHAPTER FOURTEEN
Present-Day Falldowns of Bogus Gurus **72**

CHAPTER FIFTEEN
Śāstric Qualifications of Guru **76**

CHAPTER SIXTEEN
Zero Tolerance For Guru Falldowns **85**

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN
Understanding Context **92**

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN
The Great Deception **100**

CHAPTER NINETEEN
Approaching The Authorized Current Link **102**

CHAPTER TWENTY
Amogh Līlā dāsa Contradicts Himself **112**

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE
Amogh Līlā dāsa Offends Śrīla Prabhupāda **116**

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO
Amogh Līlā dāsa Narrates Fiction **123**

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE
The Behavior of Sincere Disciples **125**

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR
Methods May Vary; Goal Is One **128**

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE
Inadequate Qualifications of Guru **137**

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX
Offensive Speculations by Amogh Līlā dāsa **139**

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN
Final Remarks **143**

A Śāstric Reply to
Amogh Līlā dāsa

CHAPTER ONE

Proper Etiquette

Opening Comment (Amogh Līlā dāsa)

What exactly is this *ṛtvikism*? We have heard of Hrithik Roshan, the Bollywood actor, but *ṛtvikism*? What is this concept?

Opening Response (Tattvavit dāsa)

He is speaking about *guru-tattva*.

"The word *guru* means 'heavy,' heavy with knowledge. And what is that knowledge? *Tad-vijñāna*. That heaviness is *brahma-niṣṭhā* – attachment to Brahman and to Para-brahman, Bhagavān. That is the *guru*'s qualification."

– *The Teachings of Lord Kapila* (Chapter 4)
Approaching a Bona Fide Guru

We are addressing a very heavy subject – the nature and identity of the *guru*. At the very least, it demands to be spoken about with gravity. Unfortunately, Amogh Līlā dāsa approaches this subject in a frivolous manner, which is

readily evident from his casual tone in which he articulates his arguments.

"Sometimes such pompous persons even present themselves as *gurus*. However, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has pointed out that they are actually *laghu*, or flimsy, rather than *guru*, or heavy with Vedic knowledge."

– *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.5.5 Purport)

Let us begin by introducing the definition of the term "*ṛtvik*" as given in Vedic literature:

agnyādheyaṁ pākayajñā
agniṣṭomādikān makhān
yaḥ karoti vṛto yasya
sa tasya ***ṛtvig*** *iha ucyate*

"He who, being duly chosen for the purpose, performs the *agnyādheya*, the *pākayajñās*, and the *śrauta yajñas* such as the *agniṣtoma* for another person, is called his officiating priest, *ṛtvik*."

– *Manu-smṛti* (2.143)

CHAPTER TWO

The Question ISKCON Hides

Argument #1 (Amogh Līlā dāsa)

Śrīla Prabhupāda intended for the *ṛtvik* system of initiations to continue only for the duration of his physical presence. However, Śrīla Prabhupāda never stated that this system should continue after his physical departure. Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja and Satsvarūpa dāsa Gosvāmī Mahārāja – both being American disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda – pose questions to him on this subject. We shall examine how Śrīla Prabhupāda responds to their queries, and we will also highlight which parts of this conversation the proponents of the *ṛtvik* system choose to present, and which parts they omit.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: "Yes. I shall recommend some of you. After this is settled up. I shall recommend some of you to act as officiating *ācārya*."

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: "Is that called *ṛtvik-ācārya*?"

Śrīla Prabhupāda: "*Ṛtvik*, yes."

Response #1 (Tattvavit dāsa)

Firstly, *he* omits the principal question that establishes the premise for the entire first segment of the conversation:

Satsvarūpa: "Then our next question concerns **initiations in the future, particularly at that time when you are no longer with us**. We want to know how first and second initiations would be conducted."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: "Yes. I shall recommend some of you. After this is settled up. I shall recommend some of you to act as officiating *ācārya*."

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: "Is that called *ṛtvik-ācārya*?"

Śrīla Prabhupāda: "***Ṛtvik*, yes**."

Although Amogh Līlā dāsa refers to this conversation in his video, he fails to present the critical question that initiates the discussion. This omission is unjustifiable, as the question posed to Śrīla Prabhupāda is highly pertinent to the subject of focus. Śrīla Prabhupāda responds directly: "Yes. I shall recommend some of you. After this is settled up. I shall recommend some of you to act as officiating *ācārya*."

The phrase "After this is settled up" indicates that other matters were under discussion prior to this conversation.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī then inquires, “Is that called *ṛtvik-ācārya*?” to which Śrīla Prabhupāda confirms, “***Ṛtvik*, yes**.”

CHAPTER THREE

The May 28, 1977 Conversation Analyzed Properly

Argument #2 (Amogh Līlā dāsa)

Now until here, proponents of the *ṛtvik* system cite the conversation only up to this point. Let us look into the portion of the conversation which they hide:

Satsvarūpa: "Then what is the relationship of that person who gives the initiation and the–"

Śrīla Prabhupāda: "He's *guru*. He's *guru*."

Satsvarūpa: "But he does it on your behalf."

After this point, Śrīla Prabhupāda clarifies the matter here by stating as follows:

Śrīla Prabhupāda: "Yes. That is formality. Because in my presence one should not become *guru*, so on my behalf. On my order, *āmāra ājñāya guru haña*, be actually *guru*. But by my order."

So the discussion is quite clear till now. Satsvarūpa dāsa Gosvāmī asks Śrīla Prabhupāda whether the appointed *ṛtvik* is only a representative or actually a regular *guru*? Śrīla

Prabhupāda responds with, "He's *guru*. He's *guru*." He repeats himself twice. He repeats himself twice to create emphasis on this fact.

Śrīla Prabhupāda goes on to subtely emphasize a particular restriction, stating that, at the time of the conversation, it is not proper etiquette to accept disciples in the physical presence of the spiritual master. Therefore, in a mood of humility, the disciple refrains from giving initiation – acknowledging that "My Guru Mahārāja is the true, current savior at this point in time." This is the subtle indication Śrīla Prabhupāda conveys through his words. Let us now examine the next segment of the conversation:

Satsvarūpa: "So they may be considered your disciples?"

Śrīla Prabhupāda: "Yes, they are disciples. Why consider? Who?"

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: "No. He is asking that these *ṛtvik-ācāryas*, they are officiating, giving *dīkṣā*, their – the people who they give *dīkṣā* to – whose disciples are they?"

A clear-cut question. Now let us see the clear-cut response:

Śrīla Prabhupāda: "They are his disciples."

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: "They are his disciples."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: "Who is initiating. He is grand-disciple."

So Śrīla Prabhupāda is actually saying that they are disciples, but of the person from whom they are receiving initiation, and Śrīla Prabhupāda would be the grand-father *guru*. Crystal-clear!

Response #2 (Tattvavit dāsa)

The assertion that we only show the conversation up until a certain point is incorrect. We do, in fact, present the entire conversation, but we do not agree with their interpretation of it. Up to "***Ṛtvik*, yes**," the exchange is entirely clear.

What follows next is a follow-up question posed by Satsvarūpa dāsa Gosvāmī, indicating that he himself did not fully grasp what Śrīla Prabhupāda intended at that juncture:

Satsvarūpa: "Then what is the relationship of that person who gives the initiation and the–"

Śrīla Prabhupāda: "He's *guru*. He's *guru*."

Satsvarūpa: "But he does it on your behalf."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: "Yes. That is formality. Because in my presence one should not become *guru*, so on my behalf. **On**

my order, *āmāra ājñāya guru hañā*, be actually *guru*. **But by my order**."

Amogh Līlā dāsa places great emphasis on Śrīla Prabhupāda repeating twice the phrase, "He's *guru*." However, we shall now demonstrate precisely what Śrīla Prabhupāda intended by those words.

Satsvarūpa dāsa Gosvāmī intended to ask about the relationship between the *ṛtvik* representative and the disciple (as evident from the phrase "But he does it on your behalf"), but he did not phrase his follow-up question correctly. So, *unintentionally*, he asked about the relation between the initiator and the disciple instead (as indicated by "[…] what is the relationship of that person who gives the initiation and […]"). **It is important to note here that the initiator or *guru* is Śrīla Prabhupāda, and the *ṛtvik* is only an officiating representative** (see *Manu-smṛti* (2.143)). Therefore, Śrīla Prabhupāda answers that the initiator [Śrīla Prabhupāda] is the *guru* of the new disciple.

Śrīla Prabhupāda also did not state that in his absence they would automatically be qualified to assume the role of *guru*. He did not issue such an authorization.

Let us continue further:

Satsvarūpa: "So they may be considered your disciples?"

Śrīla Prabhupāda: "Yes, they are disciples. Why consider? Who?"

At this point, the conversation is somewhat unclear, prompting Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī to seek clarification:

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: "No. He is asking that these *ṛtvik-ācāryas*, they are officiating, giving *dīkṣā*, their – the people who they give *dīkṣā* to – whose disciples are they?"

Śrīla Prabhupāda: "They are his disciples."

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: "They are his disciples."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: "**Who is initiating.** He is grand-disciple."

Satsvarūpa: "Then we have a question concerning–"

Śrīla Prabhupāda: "**When I order, 'You become *guru*,' he becomes regular *guru***. That's all. He becomes **disciple of my disciple**. Just see."

– Room Conversation with Śrīla Prabhupāda
May 28, 1977 | Vṛndāvana

It is clear from this exchange that only upon Śrīla Prabhupāda's explicit order does a disciple become an actual *guru*. This is not an automatic arrangement whereby the appointed *ṛtvik* representatives at the time of his

physical presence would assume the position of *guru* after his departure. **Śrīla Prabhupāda specifies that future initiates would become the disciples of his disciples only when he gives that order.**

If Śrīla Prabhupāda intended only to speak about *guru*, why did he even use the term *ṛtvik*, especially in the context of future initiations, knowing well that he would not always be physically present? Śrīla Prabhupāda first responds with a clear and immediate **"*Ṛtvik*, yes"** to Satsvarūpa dāsa Gosvāmī's question. Only afterward, in response to a follow-up inquiry by Satsvarūpa dāsa Gosvāmī, does Śrīla Prabhupāda begin to speak about *guru* – but strictly in connection with an order from him. And that order never came.

ISKCON members often argue that Śrīla Prabhupāda had already stated on numerous occasions that his disciples were being trained to become future spiritual masters. If that were indeed the case, then Śrīla Prabhupāda could have simply responded, "I have already said many times that you will all become *gurus* after I depart." That would have sufficed. But instead, Śrīla Prabhupāda stated only: **"When I order, 'You become *guru*,' he becomes regular *guru*.** That's all."

Thus the necessary authorization was not given. Śrīla Prabhupāda speaks in the futuristic tense – **"When I order"** – indicating that the order remained pending.

Argument #3 (Amogh Līlā dāsa)

Then:

Satsvarūpa: "Then we have a question concerning–"

Śrīla Prabhupāda: "When I order, 'You become *guru*,' he becomes regular *guru*. That's all. He becomes disciple of my disciple. Just see."

– Room Conversation with Śrīla Prabhupāda
May 28, 1977 | Vṛndāvana

Śrīla Prabhupāda closes the entire matter here. Everything became crystal-clear!

Response #3 (Tattvavit dāsa)

It appears that he completely missed the point. Śrīla Prabhupāda clearly states: **"When I order, 'You become *guru*,' he becomes regular *guru*."** Until such an order is given, one is not a regular *guru*. And in this case, no such order was issued.

One cannot presume or invent the order. If the authorization were already implicit or standing, then why would Śrīla Prabhupāda say, "**When I order**?" There would have been no need for that conditional clause. Yet Śrīla Prabhupāda explicitly says, "**When I order, 'You become *guru*,' he becomes regular *guru*.** That's all. He becomes **disciple of my disciple**." Until that point, however, the system remains *ṛtvik*.

CHAPTER FOUR

The July 9, 1977 Directive Is Final

Argument #4 (Amogh Līlā dāsa)

If one reads the entirety of the July 9, 1977 letter [a digital copy of the letter is displayed on-screen], nowhere within the letter is there a clear and explicit statement that after the departure of Śrīla Prabhupāda, self-appointed *ṛtvik* representatives are to continue executing this directive. This point is simply not stated anywhere.

Response #4 (Tattvavit dāsa)

Is that his analysis of the July 9, 1977 letter? At most, perhaps ten seconds – rushing through it from top to bottom so quickly that no one can even read the contents. Why does he not present the letter properly? Why does he not pause, display it clearly, and offer a point-by-point analysis?

He spends considerable time analyzing the May 28, 1977 conversation – conveniently omitting the opening question and interpreting the discussion in his own way. Śrīla Prabhupāda explicitly said, **“On my order.”** So where is that order? That critical point he does not address.

Instead, we hear: “No, no. Everyone is *guru*. Regular *guru*.” If that conversation warranted such lengthy treatment, why not apply the same standard of analysis to the July 9, 1977 letter? It is not even a long document – it is concise, clear, and addressed to the entire institution: to all GBC, temple presidents, Mahārājas, and Prabhus. It is an official directive. Why then does he avoid showing it in full? Why overlay it with commentary and prevent the audience from reading it themselves?

This is not honest presentation. This is deliberate omission – a form of deception. By omitting, he is misleading.

Now, coming to **our rebuttal**:

Even if the May 28, 1977 conversation itself left some points open to interpretation, there was a subsequent clarification. We must remember that this was an informal room conversation, involving five or six GBC members. However, shortly thereafter, a formal letter dated July 9, 1977 was issued.

And who was this letter addressed to? It was sent to “All G.B.C., and Temple Presidents; dear Mahārājas and Prabhus.” This was an organization-wide circular which

was intended to formally communicate Śrīla Prabhupāda's directive.

The letter was composed by Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī in his role as secretary to Śrīla Prabhupāda and establishes a direct connection with the May 28, 1977 conversation that took place in Vṛndāvana regarding initiations **in the future, particularly at that time when Śrīla Prabhupāda is no longer with us**:

July 9th, 1977
To All G.B.C., and Temple Presidents

Dear Maharajas and Prabhus,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your feet. **Recently when all of the GBC members were with His Divine Grace in Vrndavana**, Srila Prabhupad indicated that soon **He would appoint** some of His senior disciples to act as **"*rittik*" – representative of the *acarya***, for the purpose of performing initiations, both first initiation and second initiation. His Divine Grace has **so far** given a list of eleven disciples who **will act** in that capacity:

His Holiness Kirtanananda Swami

His Holiness Satsvarupa das Gosvami
His Holiness Jayapataka Swami
His Holiness Tamala Krsna Gosvami
His Holiness Hrdayananda Gosvami
His Holiness Bhavananda Gosvami
His Holiness Hamsadutta Swami
His Holiness Ramesvara Swami
His Holiness Harikesa Swami
His Grace Bhagavan das Adhikari
His Grace Jayatirtha das Adhikari

In the past Temple Presidents have written to Srila Prabhupad recommending a particular devotee's initiation. Now that Srila Prabhupad has named these representatives, Temple Presidents may **henceforward** send recommendation for first and second initiation to whichever of these eleven representatives are nearest their temple. After considering the recommendation, **these representatives may accept the devotee as an initiated disciple of Srila Prabhupad** by giving a spiritual name, or in the case of second initiation, by chanting on the Gayatri thread, just as Srila Prabhupad has done. **The newly initiated devotees are disciples of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupad**, the above eleven senior devotees acting as His representative. After the

Temple President receives a letter from these representatives giving the spiritual name or the thread, he can perform the fire *yajna* in the temple as was being done before. **The name of a newly initiated disciple should be sent by the representative who has accepted him or her to Srila Prabhupad, to be included in His Divine Grace's "Initiated Disciples" book.**

Hoping this finds you all well.

Your servant,

[Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī's signature appears on the original document]

Tamal Krsna Gosvami
Secretary to Srila Prabhupad

Approved [Śrīla Prabhupāda's signature appears on the original document]

– July 9, 1977 Letter

---

1. This is not a question of the *guru-śiṣya* relationship. The *guru-śiṣya* connection is not determined by physical proximity. Even if Śrīla Prabhupāda were in Australia and a prospective disciple in Europe – despite the great distance –

the relationship remains spiritually intact. The reference to "nearest" is simply a matter of convenience, not a matter of spiritual connection. It is just a managerial arrangement for how the initiation process is to be practically conducted.

2. The *ṛtvik* representatives are not the ones performing the fire *yajña*. Their role is limited to assigning spiritual names and chanting on the *Gāyatrī* threads. The actual *yajña* is typically conducted by the temple president. However, these *ṛtvik* representatives are officiating specifically on behalf of Śrīla Prabhupāda. This aligns precisely with the definition found in the *Manu-smṛti* – that the *ṛtvik* is one who performs a ritual on behalf of another. That is the role they were deputed to carry out.

3. In this letter, the point that the newly initiated disciples belong to Śrīla Prabhupāda is repeated four times:

a. **"[…] these representatives may accept the devotee as an initiated disciple of Srila Prabhupad"**

b. **"The newly initiated devotees are disciples of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupad […]"**

c. **"The name of a newly initiated disciple should be sent by the representative who has accepted him or her to Srila Prabhupad […]"**

d. “to be included in His Divine Grace’s ‘Initiated Disciples’ book.”

This short letter emphasizes no less than four times that the initiated disciple is a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda. And from when? **Henceforward**.

Now, Amogh Līlā dāsa – and indeed, most members of ISKCON – interpret the word “henceforward” to mean “only for the time being.” Even if we momentarily accept that interpretation (which, linguistically, it is not), the question remains: until when? Śrīla Prabhupāda’s instruction is clear – ***“Āmāra ājñāya guru hañā”*** – **“When I order, ‘You become *guru*,’ he becomes regular *guru*.”** Until such an order is given, one is not a *guru*; one is only a representative. And Śrīla Prabhupāda never gave that order.

Therefore, until that specific authorization is issued, the *ṛtvik* system continues. Even if Śrīla Prabhupāda is no longer physically present, the process remains the same. Why? Because there is no instruction to change it. That is the central point.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Importance of Śikṣā Gurus

Argument #5 (Amogh Līlā dāsa)

No matter who one is – if he is sincere, he would desire that a *guru* be physically present, someone with whom he can engage in direct conversations, to whom he can present and clarify doubts, from whom he can receive chastisement, for whom he can perform direct service, with whom he can directly experience love and compassion, from whom he can receive encouragement, blessings, and an initiated name. In this way, the bliss derived from association with a physically present *guru* is on an entirely different level.

Response #5 (Tattvavit dāsa)

What he has effectively described is the role of a *śikṣā-guru*. Even when Śrīla Prabhupāda was physically present, he was not personally available to each and every disciple at all times. Many disciples met him only once or twice. Only a select few had the opportunity to regularly associate with him. The vast majority did not.

The kind of day-to-day guidance Amogh Līlā dāsa is referring to – answering questions, offering instruction, encouragement, even chastisement – can easily be provided by *śikṣā-gurus*. And there are many such *śikṣā-gurus* within the institution: temple managers, senior devotees, and others who are well-versed in the teachings. These individuals are more than capable of offering practical, spiritual guidance.

So where is the lack? There is no shortage of opportunities for association and instruction. It is not necessary to be constantly in physical touch with one's *dīkṣā-guru* in order to advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The temple president, for example, continues to offer guidance. Śrīla Prabhupāda's books remain the foundational law books for our Movement. And Śrīla Prabhupāda is still giving the *divya-jñāna* – transcendental knowledge.

With that being said, this brings us to the definition of *dīkṣā*:

divyaṁ jñānaṁ yato dadyāt
kuryāt pāpasya saṅkṣayam
tasmāt dīkṣeti sā proktā
deśikais tattva-kovidaiḥ

"*Dīkṣā* is the process by which one can awaken his transcendental knowledge and vanquish all reactions caused by sinful activity. A person expert in the study of the revealed scriptures knows this process as *dīkṣā*."

– Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī's *Bhakti-sandarbha* (283)
quoted in the Purport of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta: Madhya-līlā* (15.108)

Who is giving us the *divya-jñāna*? It is Śrīla Prabhupāda – through his books, letters, lectures and conversations. That transcendental knowledge, *divya-jñāna*, is not an ordinary transmission of information; it is the very means by which one becomes purified. When one is properly situated in *divya-jñāna*, sinful reactions are completely eradicated.

This is confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā*:

yathaidhāṁsi samiddho 'gnir
bhasma-sāt kurute 'rjuna
jñānāgniḥ sarva-karmāṇi
bhasma-sāt kurute tathā

"As a blazing fire turns firewood to ashes, O Arjuna, so does the fire of knowledge burn to ashes all reactions to material activities."

– *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* (4.37)

Śrīla Prabhupāda is giving us *dīkṣā*. Of course, there is a formal ceremony, and that has its place. It must be properly conducted. But the heart of *dīkṣā* – *divya-jñāna* and the destruction of sinful reactions – comes from Śrīla Prabhupāda. The ceremony is not only symbolic, but carries spiritual potency and must be preceded by proper procedure. That procedure is the *puraścaryā* process. Śrīla Prabhupāda explained that *puraścaryā* is essential before *dīkṣā* can be effective. This includes chanting a minimum of sixteen rounds daily for at least six months, attending regular classes on Śrīla Prabhupāda's books, honoring only Kṛṣṇa-*prasādam*, associating with devotees, and performing practical devotional service in the temple. This period of preparation ensures the candidate is actually serious. Once the temple authorities see this consistency and seriousness, they will recommend the candidate for initiation. This process of *parīkṣaṇa*, or carefully observing and testing the candidate, is done by the temple leadership on behalf of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Then, upon formal initiation, that is when the *dīkṣā* process – already active through Śrīla Prabhupāda's *vāṇī* – manifests fully through the ritual. It is at this stage that the sinful reactions are burned, and the disciple becomes

properly linked to the disciplic succession through Śrīla Prabhupāda.

There is a beautiful article by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura titled *Initiation Into Spiritual Life* published in *The Harmonist* magazine. In that article, he explains that the effect of *dīkṣā* is not uniform for all. It depends on how seriously the disciple embraces the process. Of course, *dīkṣā* gives a powerful head-start, but the ultimate benefit depends on the disciple's sincerity in executing the order of the spiritual master and his attentiveness in *śravaṇa* and *kīrtana*. Only when that internal commitment is there will the full effect manifest. Otherwise, "*ye yathā māṁ prapadyante/ tāṁs tathaiva bhajāmy aham*" – as one surrenders, Lord Kṛṣṇa reciprocates. Or, as the saying goes: "*yādṛśī yādṛśī śraddhā/ siddhir bhavati tādṛśī*" – as is one's *śraddhā* (faith), so is the perfection attained. The principle is the same.

The physical or day-to-day guidance can be given by *śikṣā-gurus* and temple management. There is no absolute need for the *dīkṣā-guru* to be physically present at all times. Once the *ācārya* has established the system, and deputed the structure, it functions on his authority. That was how it was conducted even during Śrīla Prabhupāda's manifest

presence. And that same system must continue. It is really that simple.

"[...] *śikṣā* and *dīkṣā-guru*... A *śikṣā-guru* who instructs against the instruction of spiritual... he is not a *śikṣā-guru*. He is a demon. *Śikṣā-guru, dīkṣā-guru* means... **Sometimes a *dīkṣā-guru* is not present always. Therefore, one can take learning, instruction, from an advanced devotee. That is called the *śikṣā-guru*.** *Śikṣā-guru* does not mean he is speaking something against the teachings of the *dīkṣā-guru*. He is not a *śikṣā-guru*. He is a rascal."

– Śrīla Prabhupāda's Lecture
Bhagavad-gītā As It Is (17.1-3) | Jul. 4, 1974 | Honolulu

CHAPTER SIX

Sentimentality Condemned

Argument #6 (Amogh Līlā dāsa)

There are Vaiṣṇavas who, for 40-50 years, have engaged deeply in *bhakti*, chanted the holy names, and preached this philosophy all across the globe – yet they are considered ineligible for the post of *dīkṣā-gurus*? Oh. Does that logically make sense? Absolutely not!

Response #6 (Tattvavit dāsa)

Some individuals assumed the role of *guru* merely ten years after the Movement's inception – some even sooner – and have been acting as spiritual masters for several decades since. The legitimacy of such positions does not depend on the length of service alone. This raises a critical question: why does this verse exist, then?

bahu janma kare yadi śravaṇa, kīrtana
tabu ta' nā pāya kṛṣṇa-pade prema-dhana

"If one is infested with the ten offenses in the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, despite his endeavor to

chant the holy name for many births, he will not get the love of Godhead that is the ultimate goal of this chanting."

– *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta: Ādi-līlā* (8.16)

According to the *Padma Purāṇa*, there are ten offenses in chanting the holy names that, if committed, stunt one's progress in chanting. Among these, the third offense – *guror-avajñā* – is particularly serious. It refers to disrespecting the spiritual master by disobeying his instructions or regarding him as an ordinary person.

If one views the spiritual master merely as just another person (*guruṣu nara matiḥ*), or if one intentionally disobeys his orders, this constitutes a grave offense. Śrīla Prabhupāda himself never explicitly appointed anyone as *ācārya* or *guru* beyond his instructions. Therefore, anyone who assumes such a position on their own accord commits an offense, regardless of their years of service or standing.

If, out of personal weakness, one disobeys Śrīla Prabhupāda's orders, one must acknowledge the mistake and strive to correct it. However, the issue becomes far more serious when this disobedience is institutionalized – when an entire organization adopts and perpetuates this

disregard, teaching it to every newcomer. Such individuals may initially attract followers with Śrīla Prabhupāda's books, but once initiated, Śrīla Prabhupāda ceases to be their *guru*; someone else takes that role. This is not only unfair but deeply offensive.

In this context, the offense is twofold: it involves both the direct disobedience of Śrīla Prabhupāda's instructions and the deliberate establishment of a system that promotes and normalizes this disobedience. This willful institutionalization of offense represents a serious spiritual transgression.

There is no order higher than that of Śrīla Prabhupāda, and no individual, regardless of seniority, is more senior than him. Critics often accuse us of Vaiṣṇava-*nindā* – the fault-finding or blasphemy of other Vaiṣṇavas. While disrespect toward any Vaiṣṇava is to be avoided, it must be understood that Śrīla Prabhupāda is the *param*-Vaiṣṇava, the topmost Vaiṣṇava within the disciplic succession. He is the most glorious spiritual master in the line, having spread *harināma* worldwide. In fulfilling Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu's prophecy, he is the living embodiment of the Lord's mercy in this age.

To offend such an *ācārya* is a grave transgression, far more serious than offending lesser Vaiṣṇavas – especially when those Vaiṣṇavas oppose Śrīla Prabhupāda himself, the preeminent *ācārya* of Kali-yuga. Loyalty must be firmly aligned with Śrīla Prabhupāda, and opposition to him, regardless of the opponent's stature, must be rejected.

This principle is illustrated by the example of Bhīṣmadeva, who, though a *mahājana* (great soul), was opposed to the Pāṇḍavas. Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself decreed that Bhīṣmadeva must be defeated, despite his elevated status. The key consideration is which side one stands on – being a great soul does not justify opposing the Supreme Lord's pure devotees.

Therefore, calling out those who oppose Śrīla Prabhupāda is an act of honesty and truthfulness, not pride or blasphemy. Simply put, spiritual rank or length of service does not excuse disrespect or opposition to the genuine spiritual master.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Voted-In Gurus Rejected

Response #6 (Tattvavit dāsa)

[Cont'd]

Śrīla Prabhupāda stated in one conversation during his lecture:

Madhudvīṣa: "We have been here for many lifetimes performing sinful activities. So is it possible to counteract all those sinful activities in one lifetime, or does it require many...?"

Prabhupāda: "One minute. That is Kṛṣṇa consciousness Movement. One minute. You are not reading *Bhagavad-gītā*? What Kṛṣṇa says? *Sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekam śaraṇaṁ vraja, ahaṁ tvāṁ sarva-pāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi* [Bg. 18.66] – 'You surrender unto Me. Give up your all business. I will give you relief from all sinful reaction immediately.' So it requires one minute. 'My dear Kṛṣṇa, I was forgotten. Now I understand. I fully surrender unto You.' Then you become immediately free from all sinful reactions. Without any reservation, without any politics, if you fully surrender, Kṛṣṇa is assuring, *ahaṁ tvāṁ sarva-pāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ*. He reassures, 'Don't

worry whether I will be able to give you relief from all reaction.' *Mā śucaḥ*. 'Finished, guaranteed. You do this.' So how much time it requires to surrender to Kṛṣṇa? Immediately you can do that. Surrender means you surrender and work as Kṛṣṇa says. That is surrender. What Kṛṣṇa says to do? *Man-manā bhava mad-bhakto mad-yājī māṁ namaskuru* [Bg. 18.65]. Four things – 'You always think of Me, and you become My devotee, you worship Me, and offer your respect, full obeisances, unto Me.' You do these four things. That is full surrender. *Mām evaiṣyasi asaṁśaya*: 'Then you come to Me without any doubt.' Everything is there. Kṛṣṇa has given everything fully. If you accept it, then life is very simple. There is no difficulty. Yes?"

– Q&A Session of Śrīla Prabhupāda's Lecture
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (6.1.1-2) | May 22, 1975 | Melbourne

In fact, in the video recording of this lecture, one can observe how emphatically Śrīla Prabhupāda declared this principle. His eyes opened wide as he said, "One minute." This underscores the importance of the point being made. However, due to conditioned habits, it is understandably difficult to immediately develop all the required qualities. This is precisely what Śrīla Prabhupāda himself acknowledged:

Prabhupāda: "No, you become *guru*, **but you must be qualified first of all. Then you become.**"

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: "Oh, that kind of complaint was there."

Prabhupāda: "Did you know that?"

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: "Yeah, I heard that, yeah."

Prabhupāda: "What is the use of producing some rascal *guru*?"

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: "Well, I have studied myself and all of your disciples, and it's clear fact that we are all conditioned souls, so **we cannot be *guru***. Maybe one day it may be possible..."

Prabhupāda: "Hmm."

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: "**...but not now.**"

Prabhupāda: "**Yes.** I shall choose some *guru*. I shall say, 'Now you become *ācārya*. You become authorized.' **I am waiting for that.** You become all *ācārya*. I retire completely. **But the training must be complete**."

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: "The process of purification must be there."

Prabhupāda: "Oh, yes, must be there. Caitanya Mahāprabhu wants that. *Āmāra ājñāya guru hañā*. 'You

become *guru*.' [laughs] **But be qualified.** Little thing, strictly follower..."

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: "**Not rubber stamp.**"

Prabhupāda: "**Then you'll not be effective. You can cheat, but it will not be effective.** Just see our Gauḍīya Maṭha. Everyone wanted to become *guru*, and a small temple and *'guru.'* What kind of *guru*? No publication, no preaching, simply bring some foodstuff... My Guru Mahārāja used to say, 'Joint mess,' a place for eating and sleeping. *Amar amar ara takana* [?] – 'Joint mess.' He said this."

– Room Conversation with Śrīla Prabhupāda
Apr. 22, 1977 | Bombay

1. When Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī stated, "I have studied myself and all of your disciples, and it's clear fact that we are all conditioned souls, so **we cannot be *guru***," it is important to note the date of this conversation – April 22, 1977 – just seven months before Śrīla Prabhupāda's departure on November 14, 1977. None of them were qualified, and thus Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī's statement, "**we cannot be *guru***," holds profound significance.

2. Furthermore, notice how Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī adds, "Maybe one day it may be possible..." Here, he is already

contemplating the possibility of becoming a *guru*. A genuine spiritual master would never entertain such thoughts of aspiring to become a *guru*:

"As soon as a foolish disciple tries to overtake his spiritual master and **becomes ambitious to occupy his post**, he **immediately falls down**."

– *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (5.12.14 Purport)

This highlights the essential principle: **rubber-stamping appointments will not suffice. The individual must be truly qualified and possess the necessary potency.** The qualifications of a *guru* must be clearly understood. *Guru-tattva* means first and foremost that one must understand who can legitimately be a *guru*.

Regrettably, within ISKCON, the whole principle of *guru-tattva* has been muddled and diluted into a very weak version of what a *guru* truly should be – *brahmaṇy upaśamāśrayam* and *brahma-niṣṭham*. *Brahma-niṣṭham* signifies being firmly fixed and established, not flimsy or temporary, easily falling away after some time. Such weakness is not the hallmark of a genuine *guru*, but rather a characteristic of the impotent (*laghu*), lacking true weight and stability.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Desire ≠ Order

Argument #7 (Amogh Līlā dāsa)

One devotee asks Śrīla Prabhupāda:

Mohsin Hassan: "Yeah, the tenth. After you, is it..., any decision has been made who will take over?"

Prabhupāda: "Yes. All of them will take. These students who are initiated from me, all of them will act as I am doing. Just like I have got many Godbrothers, they are all acting. Similarly, all these disciples which I am making, initiating, they are being trained to become future spiritual masters."

– Room Conversation with Mohsin Hassan
Jul. 18, 1971 | Detroit

Response #7 (Tattvavit dāsa)

There are two distinct concepts to be understood here: hope and order. Śrīla Prabhupāda certainly expressed his hope that his disciples would become qualified spiritual masters in the future. However, an order is something entirely different. An order is given when one is actually deemed qualified – when Śrīla Prabhupāda personally evaluates and

affirms, “Yes, now he can become *guru*.” Until then, it remains a hope, not an authorization.

Śrīla Prabhupāda desired that all his disciples would rise to that standard, but not all would, because not all would take the process seriously. Whether one becomes qualified or not ultimately depends on the individual’s sincerity, effort, and actual advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Therefore, there is a critical distinction: **hope vs. order**.

In the previously cited conversation dated April 22, 1977, Śrīla Prabhupāda expressed (paraphrased): “I am waiting. I want to say, ‘You become *ācārya*,’ but I am waiting for qualification.” To this, Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī responded (paraphrased), “None of us are qualified. We are all conditioned souls.” And Śrīla Prabhupāda affirmed (paraphrased), “Hmm, yes. Therefore, the training must go on.”

To conflate Śrīla Prabhupāda’s hopeful encouragement with an actual directive – an order – is misleading. Declaring that “everyone is a future spiritual master” based on general hopes, while ignoring the specific qualifications and absence of any formal order, is a misrepresentation. Śrīla Prabhupāda repeatedly emphasized continuing the disciplic succession, but it must be done according to proper

understanding – not sentimentality or institutional convenience.

As the *nyāya-śāstra* states:

pūrva-parayor madhye
para-vidhir balavān

"Between the former rule and the latter rule, the latter is more important."

– *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta: Antya-līlā* (8.80)
quoting the *Nyāya* literatures

Now let us examine the Purport to the preceding verse:

"The above-mentioned verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* gives two injunctions. The first, called *pūrva-vidhi*, is that one should not praise, and the second, *para-vidhi*, is that one should not criticize. As will be apparent from the following verse, the injunction against praise is less important than the injunction against blasphemy. **One should carefully observe the *para-vidhi*, although one may neglect the *pūrva-vidhi*.** Thus the actual injunction is that one may praise but should not criticize. This is called *śleṣokti*, or a statement having two meanings. Rāmacandra Purī, however, acted in just the opposite way, for he neglected the

para-vidhi but strictly observed the *pūrva-vidhi*. **Since he avoided following the principle of not criticizing, Rāmacandra Purī broke both the rules.**"

– *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta: Antya-līlā* (8.79 Purport)

This is precisely what the current ISKCON leadership is doing – they are disregarding the *para-vidhi*, the later instruction, in which Śrīla Prabhupāda explicitly stated "***Ṛtvik*, yes**" and used the word "**henceforward**" in the July 9, 1977 directive. He gave no further order superseding it. This pivotal instruction has been neglected, while the earlier statements – the *pūrva-vidhi* – are selectively emphasized: "Śrīla Prabhupāda said 'future spiritual masters,'" "Śrīla Prabhupāda said 'law of disciplic succession,'" and so on.

Yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda did express such hopes. He wanted that. But the reality is – we failed him. We were not serious enough, we did not become qualified. Therefore, out of his unfathomable compassion, he implemented a system that would be foolproof: the *ṛtvik* system. Whether one is qualified or not, if the *ṛtvik* system is followed, then everyone – across generations – can remain safely under Śrīla Prabhupāda's shelter for the full duration of the Movement, which is predicted to span at least 10,000 years.

This is how far-reaching and merciful Śrīla Prabhupāda's vision truly is. Yet tragically, ISKCON today chooses to ignore the *para-vidhi*, clinging instead to the *pūrva-vidhi* – which was merely **an expression of hope contingent on qualification.** And worse still, they are not properly following either instruction. Just like Rāmacandra Purī, they are breaking both rules. They have rejected the final order – the July 9, 1977 letter – and they are also failing to live up to the qualification required by the earlier instruction. Śrīla Prabhupāda said (paraphrased), "I want every one of you to become spiritual master," but that was by qualification – *brahma-niṣṭham*. And yet so many have fallen, again and again.

CHAPTER NINE

Nyāya's Para Vidhi In Practice

Response #7 (Tattvavit dāsa)

[Cont'd]

So in truth, both instructions are being violated. And this makes the verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (quoted in the Purport to *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta – Antya-līlā:* 8.79) all the more instructive and relevant. One should study it carefully.

On a similar note, there is a beautiful conversation that takes place after a lecture delivered by Śrīla Prabhupāda:

Acyutānanda: [reading question put by audience] "Śrī Kṛṣṇa says in the end of the *Gītā, sarva-dharmān parityajya* [Bg. 18.66], but in another place in the *Gītā*, twice it is mentioned, *śreyān sva-dharmo, para-dharmo bhayāvahaḥ* – one should perform his own duty rather than another's duty."

Prabhupāda: "Yes."

Acyutānanda: "How can we..."

Prabhupāda: **"I may say many things to you, but when I say something directly, 'Do it,' your first duty is to do that. You cannot argue, 'Sir, you said me like this before.'**

No, that is not your duty. What I say now, you do it. That is obedience. You cannot argue. Of course, Kṛṣṇa never said anything contradictory, but if when one thinks foolishly that Kṛṣṇa said something contradictory, no, that is not to be. You could not understand. So, 'Even though you could not understand, you take My direct orders now, *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekam...* [Bg. 18.66]. That is your business.' The master says like that, and the servant's business is to accept it as it is, without any argument. That's all right."

– Q&A Session of Śrīla Prabhupāda's Lecture
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (5.5.3) | Apr. 15, 1975 | Hyderabad

1. The question posed by Acyutānanda dāsa to Śrīla Prabhupāda centers around what appears to be a contradiction in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. In one section, Lord Kṛṣṇa instructs Arjuna to perform his prescribed duties – emphasizing that it is better to fail in one's own duty than to succeed in another's. But later, in the concluding instruction, Kṛṣṇa says, "Give up all varieties of duties and just surrender unto Me." So the question arises: Why does Kṛṣṇa seem to offer multiple instructions? Why not speak the final instruction from the beginning? Acyutānanda dāsa is

essentially asking, “How should we properly understand this progression?”

2. Now, regarding the response: Lord Kṛṣṇa is not speaking many conflicting things. He is presenting one coherent conclusion, step by step. He is leading us to that point. Even if one fails to grasp the entire philosophical build-up, simply following the final instruction – *sarva-dharmān parityajya māṁ ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja* – is sufficient for perfection. In the same way, Śrīla Prabhupāda never contradicted himself. ISKCON’s members often accuse us of suggesting that Śrīla Prabhupāda suddenly changed his position – “He spoke all his life about his disciples becoming spiritual masters, and then suddenly he says something else in 1977? That is a contradiction!” But this is a complete misunderstanding. There is no contradiction. Śrīla Prabhupāda repeatedly expressed his hope that his disciples would become qualified to carry on the disciplic succession. But hope is not the same as an order. He made it very clear – particularly in the April 22, 1977 conversation – that no one had yet become qualified. Seven months later, nothing had significantly changed. In fact, history reveals that some of those very individuals administered poison to Śrīla Prabhupāda. And these same persons later claimed to be pure devotees? Let’s be honest. No one was qualified. And

yet Śrīla Prabhupāda, in his boundless mercy, did not leave the Movement in a state of limbo. Instead, he instituted the *ṛtvik* system – authorized and formalized it – so that the disciplic succession would continue unbroken under his shelter for the full duration of the Movement, which is predicted to continue for millenniums.

The tragedy is, ISKCON's members simply fail to grasp this. They selectively cite Śrīla Prabhupāda's hopeful statements about future *gurus* while ignoring the *para-vidhi*, the final instruction. But we certainly understand Śrīla Prabhupāda's true intention, and it is crystal clear.

Now, although Amogh Līlā dāsa does not mention it, let us take a peek at this letter addressed to Tuṣṭa Kṛṣṇa Svāmī:

"Keep trained up very rigidly and then you are bona fide Guru, and you can accept disciples on the same principle. But as a matter of etiquette it is the custom that during the lifetime of your Spiritual master you bring the prospective disciples to him, and in his absence or disappearance you can accept disciples without any limitation. This is the law of disciplic succession. I want to see my disciples become bona fide Spiritual Master and spread Krishna consciousness very widely, that will make me and Krishna very happy."

– Śrīla Prabhupāda's Letter to Tuṣṭa Kṛṣṇa Svāmī
Dec. 2 1975 | New Delhi

Is that really the law? What is actually at play here? Is this a case of questioning Śrīla Prabhupāda's words? Not at all. But if one insists that "every disciple must become a *dīkṣā-guru*" is the irrevocable law of disciplic succession, then why did Śrīla Prabhupāda also say:

"Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, at the time of his departure, requested all his disciples to form a governing body and conduct missionary activities cooperatively. **He did not instruct a particular man to become the next *ācārya*.** But just after his passing away, his leading secretaries made plans, without authority, to occupy the post of *ācārya*, and they split into two factions over who the next *ācārya* would be. Consequently, both factions were *asāra*, or useless, because they had no authority, having disobeyed the order of the spiritual master. Despite the spiritual master's order to form a governing body and execute the missionary activities of the Gauḍīya Maṭha, the two unauthorized factions began litigation that is still going on after forty years with no decision."

– *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta: Ādi-līlā* (12.8 Purport)

1. If the law of disciplic succession were that, after the disappearance of the *ācārya*, every initiated disciple of that *ācārya* automatically becomes a *guru*, then there would be no need for any instruction. There would simply be *gurus* by default. But we see how Śrīla Prabhupāda clearly stated, **"He did not instruct a particular man to become the next *ācārya*."** This is reiterated in the May 28, 1977 conversation – "*āmāra ājñāya guru haña*" – as well as in the April 22, 1977 discussion – (paraphrased) "I am waiting [to order you, my disciples, to become successor *ācāryas*]." So it is evident: he has to order. **The law of disciplic succession is not automatic.**

2. Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote this to warn precisely against this kind of distortion repeating itself within ISKCON – and unfortunately, that is exactly what happened.

3. Even today, ISKCON Bangalore and ISKCON Mumbai were entangled in a litigation that lasted nearly 25 years. That is the context. Finally, by Lord Kṛṣṇa's mercy, just a few days before this publication, the case was settled in the Supreme Court. It was ISKCON Mumbai's aggression throughout. In fact, ISKCON Kolkata was at one point following the *ṛtvik* system, but members from ISKCON Mumbai brought *guṇḍās* (dacoits) to beat the devotees and forcibly occupy the temple. This is not rumor or

exaggeration; this is documented history. ISKCON Mumbai attempted to do the same in Bangalore. Fortunately, they were unsuccessful. Madhu Paṇḍit dāsa fought back legally, and after a long and difficult battle, the verdict finally came in his favor. But this shows clearly how ISKCON's other branches are persecuting those who remain loyal to Śrīla Prabhupāda's final instructions. These people are not behaving like Vaiṣṇavas.

Yet after all this, we have people like Amogh Līlā dāsa trying to portray them as respectable Vaiṣṇavas. But nothing could be further from the truth. Vaiṣṇava behavior is marked by humility, tolerance, and spotless character. People have even died over this issue. Sulocana dāsa, in 1986, attempted to expose this corruption. He was preparing to publish *The Guru Business*, a book documenting how Śrīla Prabhupāda's Movement was being hijacked and turned into a business by unqualified men. He was murdered.

Another individual was also brutally killed. This is supposed to be Vaiṣṇavism? Forget litigation – murders, sexual scandals and grotesque cover-ups have plagued ISKCON's leadership since 1978, and all in the name of "succession." This is not the *parampara* Śrīla Prabhupāda envisioned.

CHAPTER TEN

Strict Obedience to Guru

Response #7 (Tattvavit dāsa)

[Cont'd]

Here is some additional information on this matter to better understand the situation:

keha ta' ācārya ājñāya, keha ta' svatantra
sva-mata kalpanā kare daiva-paratantra

"Some of the disciples strictly accepted the orders of the *ācārya*, and others deviated, independently concocting their own opinions under the spell of *daivī-māyā*."

PURPORT: "This verse describes the beginning of a schism. When disciples do not stick to the principle of accepting the order of their spiritual master, immediately there are two opinions. **Any opinion different from the opinion of the spiritual master is useless. One cannot infiltrate materially concocted ideas into spiritual advancement. That is deviation.** There is no scope for adjusting spiritual advancement to material ideas."

– *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta: Ādi-līlā* (12.9)
Verse + Purport

ācāryera mata yei, sei mata sāra
tāṅra ājñā laṅghi' cale, sei ta' asāra

"The order of the spiritual master is the active principle in spiritual life. Anyone who disobeys the order of the spiritual master immediately becomes useless."

PURPORT: "Here is the opinion of Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī. Persons who strictly follow the orders of the spiritual master are useful in executing the will of the Supreme, whereas **persons who deviate from the strict order of the spiritual master are useless.**"

– *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta: Ādi-līlā* (12.10)
Verse + Purport

Therefore, the moment anyone disobeys the order of the spiritual master – it does not matter how much service they have rendered or how long they have been in the Movement – they become completely useless. And this is not some minor deviation. It is a major, willful and persistent act of defiance. Worse still, they are not just disobeying quietly –

they are preaching that disobedience as well as institutionalizing it.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Infertility of Insincere Disciples

Argument #8 (Amogh Līlā dāsa)

And look at Śrīla Prabhupāda's potency! He is an *ācārya* – a most powerful *ācārya*. So powerful that he is fully capable of producing numerous *dīkṣā-gurus*, *śikṣā-gurus*, mentors, and philosophers for the benefit of future generations. But if one suggests that he was not capable of producing even a single *dīkṣā-guru* for the next generation – implying weakness or impotence – then what greater offense could there be? Śrīla Prabhupāda has descended by the mercy and compassion of the Supreme Lord to bestow immense benefit and fortune upon the coming generations, and yet they claim he lacked the strength to produce even one *dīkṣā-guru*. In effect, they are accusing Śrīla Prabhupāda of being an impotent *ācārya*, though they may not say so explicitly. The implication, however, is unmistakably there – that he could not give the next generation a *dīkṣā-guru*. No, that is simply not the case.

Response #8 (Tattvavit dāsa)

This is an accusation that has been directed toward us. It is said that Śrīla Prabhupāda possesses the potency to transform billions, even trillions – even the entire universe – into pure devotees. However, it is important to understand a key distinction: there is such a thing as impotence, but also infertility.

In the context of conception, if a pregnancy does not occur, it may be due either to the man's impotence or the woman's infertility. In either case, the outcome is the same – pregnancy will not take place. Similarly, if a seed is potent but the soil is barren, the seed, though sown, will not sprout.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's potency is beyond question; it is not under scrutiny. The determining factor lies with us: whether we are fertile or not – whether our hearts are spiritually receptive. It depends on whether we are cultivating the *bhakti-latā-bīja*, the seed of devotional service, with proper care and sincerity.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu explains that upon receiving this seed of devotion, we are responsible for its cultivation. This cultivation is referred to as *secana*, which means "watering." We are its gardeners. The process of watering,

in this context, refers to *śravaṇa-kīrtana* – the hearing and chanting of the holy names and pastimes of the Lord.

These are the essential and sequential stages of spiritual advancement:

ādau śraddhā tataḥ sādhu-
saṅgo 'tha bhajana-kriyā
tato 'nartha-nivṛttiḥ syāt
tato niṣṭhā rucis tataḥ

athāsaktis tato bhāvas
tataḥ premābhyudañcati
sādhakānām ayaṁ premṇaḥ
prādurbhāve bhavet kramaḥ

"In the beginning there must be faith. Then one becomes interested in associating with pure devotees. Thereafter, one is initiated by the spiritual master and executes the regulative principles under his orders. Thus one is freed from all unwanted habits and becomes firmly fixed in devotional service. Thereafter, one develops taste and attachment. This is the way of *sādhana-bhakti*, the execution of devotional service according to the regulative principles. Gradually, emotions intensify, and finally there is an

awakening of love. This is the gradual development of love of Godhead for the devotee interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness."

– *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta: Madhya-līlā* (23.14-15)

Unless we attain the platform of *kṛṣṇa-prema*, we cannot truly be considered pure devotees. There are multiple stages of advancement that one must progress through, and naturally, this will require time. However, the pace of advancement ultimately depends on the seriousness of the practitioner.

If, by April 22, 1977 – when Śrīla Prabhupāda stated, **"I am waiting for that"** – no one had become a pure devotee, this cannot be regarded as a failure on Śrīla Prabhupāda's part. Rather, it reflects a shortcoming on the part of his disciples. And it is not exactly a failure, because the process takes time. On the other hand, if one *purposefully* disobeys the instructions of the spiritual master, that is definitely to be regarded as failure.

Furthermore, even if someone becomes a pure devotee, and even if there are many such devotees, the *ṛtvik* system of initiation can still be followed without any difficulty. That is the beauty of this system: it does not depend entirely on

the qualifications of the disciples. Everyone is able to take shelter of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

For example, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, though a pure devotee, did not assume the role of *dīkṣā-guru*. Instead, he served as a *śikṣā-guru* for Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, and Śyāmānanda Paṇḍit. Thus, one may remain a pure devotee and *śikṣā-guru*, guiding others effectively, and naturally, a senior or pure devotee will be respected. It is not a requirement to become a *dīkṣā-guru*. Even Arjuna did not become a *dīkṣā-guru* – it was not necessary.

In the *ṛtvik* system of initiation, the shelter of the pure devotee is always present. Śrīla Prabhupāda established a foolproof system intended for all future generations. He secured our spiritual lives by instituting the *ṛtvik* system, yet some are blaspheming it. They are making a mockery as they refer to it as “Hrithik Roshan.” Such matters are being treated lightly and irreverently.

Some have even claimed that the *ṛtvik* system is Māyāvāda, or have likened *ṛtvik*s to Ekalavyas, suggesting that we are merely worshipping *mūrtis*, just as Ekalavya worshipped the *mūrti* of Droṇācārya. These interpretations of the *ṛtvik* system are entirely unfounded – utter nonsense and mere accusations.

In fact, there is a thoughtful article written by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura entitled *Ekalavya vs. Arjuna*. The essential message of that article is the importance of following the order of the spiritual master – it is not about the *mūrti* itself. After all, Śrīla Prabhupāda's *mūrti* is present everywhere; we have it, and so does ISKCON. The real question is: who is actually following the order? That is what truly matters.

CHAPTER TWELVE

The Appointment of Future Ṛtvik Representatives

Argument #9 (Amogh Līlā dāsa)

Moreover, with regard to the July 9, 1977 letter, there is one important question to ask ourselves: will there be self-appointed *ṛtvik* representatives in the future? (What do we do when the eleven appointed *ṛtvik* representatives depart from this world?) Ten out of the eleven have passed, and Jayapatākā Svāmī is still present – and is functioning as a *dīkṣā-guru*. So now, when *ṛtvik* representatives are being appointed, where is it stated that Śrīla Prabhupāda authorized a self-appointed system of *ṛtvik* representatives? There is no such authorization in writing. No such letter. And this is not even mentioned anywhere in the July 9, 1977 letter either!

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja typed this letter. In this letter, he is the one who used the term "henceforward," and he is the one who defined the word in its proper context – he says it refers only up to Śrīla Prabhupāda's physical departure. So it does not mean the system will continue into posterity. Not at all. The very person who typed it is the one asserting that

the *ṛtvik* system was put in place for the time being. Śrīla Prabhupāda was not the one who typed this letter – Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja typed it. So, at the very least, sir, please believe in the words of the person who typed the letter!

Response #9 (Tattvavit dāsa)

There is a very interesting conversation at *Topanga Canyon Pyramid House Talks*. This particular topic has been covered in our position paper titled *Initiations After 1977*, but we shall mention all the relevant points here:

1. One may ask as to what would happen after these eleven have passed away or fallen from grace for any reason.

a. The sentence prior to the list of eleven representatives reads "His Divine Grace has **so far** given a list of eleven disciples who will act in that capacity:" The words "**so far**" indicate that there is no intention to make them the final list and that is exactly what was confirmed in point **b.** below.

b. Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī, in his confession in 1980, quoted Śrīla Prabhupāda as saying, "**As is necessary, others may be added**."

2. It is important to note that Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī was the principal engineer behind the establishment of the bogus *guru* system within ISKCON. He was, in fact, suspended from his *guru*-ship in 1980, which is when he came forward to confess. At present, Amogh Līlā dāsa states, "So, at the very least, sir, please believe in the words of the person who typed the letter!" Very well, let us examine what Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī was indeed saying on December 3, 1980. But before we do, a few contextual remarks are necessary: Why did Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī confess? At that time, he had become increasingly unruly to the point where the GBC suspended him – along with Haṁsadutta Svāmī – from functioning as *"gurus."* It was in this context that Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī issued his confession. However, he would later shamelessly deny having made it. Yet, during that brief period of restored good judgment, he did in fact speak the truth. The December 3, 1980 conversation in question is quite extensive. When transcribed and printed (PDF obtained from a publicly accessible website), the conversation spanned 45 pages. What follows is an excerpt from that transcript, containing the portion in which Tamāla Kṛṣṇa explicitly confesses. We now present that segment:

I've had a certain realization a few days ago. [...] There are obviously so many statements by Śrīla Prabhupāda that his Guru Mahārāja did not appoint any successors. [...] Even in Prabhupāda's books he says *guru* means by qualification. [...]

The inspiration came because there was a questioning on my part, so Kṛṣṇa spoke. Actually, Prabhupāda never appointed any *gurus*. [...] He appointed eleven *ṛtvik*s. He never appointed them *gurus*. Myself and the other GBC have done the greatest disservice to this Movement the last three years because we interpreted the appointment of *ṛtvik*s as the appointment of *gurus*.

What actually happened I'll explain. I explained it, but the interpretation is wrong. **What actually happened was that Prabhupāda mentioned he might be appointing some *ṛtvik*s, so the GBC met for various reasons, and they went to Prabhupāda, five or six of us (This refers to the meeting of May 28, 1977). We asked him, "Śrīla Prabhupāda, after your departure, if we accept disciples, whose disciples will they be, your disciples or mine?"**

Later on there was a piled up list for people to get initiated, and it was jammed up. I said, “Śrīla Prabhupāda, you once mentioned about *ṛtvik*s. I don’t know what to do. We don’t want to approach you, but there’s hundreds of devotees named, and I’m just holding all the letters. I don’t know what you want to do.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda said, “All right, I will appoint so many...,” and he started to name them [...] He made it very clear that they are his disciples. At that point, it was very clear in my mind that they were his disciples. Later on, I asked him two questions, one: “What about Brahmānanda Svāmī?” I asked him this because I happened to have an affection for Brahmānanda Svāmī. [...] So Śrīla Prabhupāda said, “No, not unless he is qualified.” **Before I got ready to type the letter, I asked him, two: “Śrīla Prabhupāda is this all or do you want to add more?” He said, “As is necessary, others may be added.”** Now I understand that what he did was very clear. He was physically incapable of performing the function of initiation physically; therefore he appointed officiating priests to initiate on his behalf. He appointed eleven, and he said very clearly, “Whoever is nearest, he can initiate.” This is a very important point, because when it comes to initiating, if it isn’t whoever is nearest, it’s wherever your heart goes. Who (you) repose

your faith on, you take initiation from him. **But when it's officiating, it's whoever is nearest, and he was very clear. He named them. They were spread out all over the world, and he said, "Whoever you're nearest, you just approach that person, and they'll check you out. Then, on my behalf, they'll initiate."**

It is not a question that you repose your faith in that person – nothing. That's a function for the *guru*. "In order for me to manage this Movement," Prabhupāda said, "I have to form a GBC and I will appoint the following people. In order to continue the process of people joining our Movement and getting initiated, I have to appoint some priests to help me because just like I cannot physically manage everyone myself, I physically cannot initiate everyone myself."

And that's all that it was, and it was never any more than that. If it had been more than that, you can bet your bottom dollar that Prabhupāda would have spoken for days and hours and weeks on end about how to set up this thing with the *gurus*, but he didn't because he already had said it a million times. He said, "My Guru Mahārāja did not appoint anyone. It's by qualification." **We made a great mistake.** After Prabhupāda's departure, what is the position of these eleven people? [...]

Prabhupāda showed that it is not just *sannyāsīs*. He named two people who were *gṛhasthas*, who could at least be *ṛtviks*, showing that they were equal to any *sannyāsī*. So, anyone who is spiritually qualified – it's always been understood that you cannot accept disciples in the presence of your *guru*, but when the *guru* disappears, you can accept disciples if you are qualified and someone can repose their faith. Of course, they (prospective disciples) should be fully appraised at how to distinguish who is a proper *guru*. But if you are a proper *guru*, and your *guru* is no longer present, that is your right. It's like a man can procreate [...] Unfortunately, the GBC did not recognize this point. They immediately (assumed, decided) these eleven people are the selected *gurus*. I can definitely say for myself, and for which I humbly beg forgiveness from everybody, that there was definitely some degree of trying to control [...] This is the conditioned nature, and it came out in the highest position of all, "*Guru*, oh wonderful! Now I'm a *guru*, and there is only eleven of us." [...] I feel that this realization or this understanding is essential if we are to avoid further things from happening, because, believe me, it's going to repeat. It's just a question of time until things have a little bit faded out and again another incident is going to happen, whether it's here in L.A. or somewhere else. It's going to continuously

happen until you allow the actual spiritual force of Kṛṣṇa to be exhibited without restriction. [...] I feel that the GBC body, if they don't adopt this point very quickly, if they don't realize **this truth: You cannot show me anything on tape or in writing where Prabhupāda says: "I appoint these eleven as *gurus*." It does not exist because he never appointed any *gurus*. This is a myth.** [...] The day you got initiated you get the right to become a father when your father disappears, if you are qualified. No appointment. It doesn't require an appointment, because there isn't one.

– Topanga Canyon Pyramid House Talks
Dec. 3, 1980 | Los Angeles

---

a. By stating "**Kṛṣṇa spoke**," it seems that Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī still presented himself as though he were some highly elevated devotee. Nevertheless, **let us take the statement at face value and accept that "Kṛṣṇa spoke."** Then why, subsequently, did he retract the entire statement? He said, "**Kṛṣṇa spoke**," and yet later denied having made the confession at all. In fact, we accessed Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī's audio archives and specifically searched for the confession dated December 3, 1980. The confession is no

longer present in the archive – it has been removed. Nevertheless, this transcript has somehow managed to survive, and we now possess the complete 45-page record of that talk.

b. Now, what exactly did Lord Kṛṣṇa supposedly say through Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī? **"Actually, Prabhupāda never appointed any *gurus*. […] He appointed eleven *ṛtvik*s. He never appointed them *gurus*."** In another two years from this publication, it will mark fifty years of disobedience since the physical departure of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

c. The statement, **"What actually happened was that Prabhupāda mentioned he might be appointing some *ṛtvik*s, so the GBC met for various reasons, and they went to Prabhupāda, five or six of us,"** refers to the meeting that took place on May 28, 1977. Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī subsequently paraphrases the question that was posed to Śrīla Prabhupāda during that meeting.

d. **"It is not a question that you repose your faith in that person – nothing. That's a function for the *guru*."** In this statement, Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī reiterates a point we have explained earlier: it is not a matter of physical distance. For example, if I wish to take initiation from a

particular *guru* who is situated far away, but I am instead directed to take the initiation from someone geographically closer, then it is not truly a *guru-śiṣya* relationship. Rather, it is an officiating, managerial arrangement.

e. **"You cannot show me anything on tape or in writing where Prabhupāda says: 'I appoint these eleven as *gurus*.'"** This is Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī's own admission – and, according to him, it is Lord Kṛṣṇa who spoke.

f. "The day you got initiated you get the right to become a father when your father disappears, if you are qualified. No appointment. It doesn't require an appointment, because there isn't one." **We do not concur with Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī on this particular point**, as this statement reflects his *own* interpretation. As has been explained many times, Śrīla Prabhupāda explicitly clarifies that beyond possessing the requisite qualifications, a pure devotee must also be authorized by his *guru* in order to assume the role of *guru* himself. Thus this portion of the transcript is to be understood as partially a misunderstanding and partially a confession.

For the sake of completeness and proper documentation, we present the following conversation:

Indian man (1): "When did you began to become the spiritual leader of Kṛṣṇa consciousness?"

Prabhupāda: "What is that?"

Brahmānanda: "He's asking when did you become the spiritual leader of Kṛṣṇa consciousness?"

Prabhupāda: "**When my Guru Mahārāja ordered me. This is the *guru-paramparā*.**"

Indian man (1): "Did he just..."

Prabhupāda: "Try to understand. Don't go very speedily. **A *guru* can become *guru* when he's ordered by his *guru*. That's all. Otherwise, nobody can become *guru*.**"

[...]

Indian man (1): "When did he tell you to...?"

Prabhupāda: "What is the business, when did he tell me? And why shall I disclose to you? It is so very insignificant thing that I have to explain to you?"

Indian man (1): "No, I am just curious to know when."

Prabhupāda: "You should be curious within your limit. **You should know that one can become *guru* when he is ordered by his *guru*.** This much."

– Q&A Session of Śrīla Prabhupāda's Lecture
Bhagavad-gītā As It Is (7.2) | Oct. 28, 1975 | Nairobi

Note how Śrīla Prabhupāda did not claim that upon becoming qualified, he immediately assumed the role of *dīkṣā-guru* – as though his Guru Mahārāja had physically departed and therefore he was next in line by default. **Although Śrīla Prabhupāda was fully qualified from the time of his birth (having been sent directly by Lord Kṛṣṇa), he nevertheless waited for the explicit order of his *guru*.** How and when that order was given is not for us to question. It was given, and thus we must accept it. This is the principle.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Disobedience Causes Falldowns

Argument #10 (Amogh Līlā dāsa)

Proponents of the *ṛtvik* system do not agree with the current *guru* system in ISKCON simply because many of our *gurus* have experienced falldowns.

Response #10 (Tattvavit dāsa)

It is a misconception to assert that the *ṛtvik* system is a reaction to the falldown of ISKCON "*gurus*." On the contrary, the falldown of these individuals is, in fact, a consequence of their disobedience to the *ṛtvik* system instituted by Śrīla Prabhupāda. The causal relationship is the inverse of what is often assumed. Our position is not one of reactionary response; rather the discovery of the *ṛtvik* system and its significance occurred retrospectively – after a series of "*guru*" falldowns had already taken place. It was only then that devotees began to question the unfolding circumstances, leading eventually to a deeper investigation and the surfacing of relevant documentation.

The sequence of events unfolded as follows: first, the "*gurus*" began to fall, which prompted inquiries among the devotees. This process of questioning and critical examination led to the unearthing of Śrīla Prabhupāda's directives regarding the *ṛtvik* system.

An appropriate analogy can be drawn from the field of medicine. When diagnosing a patient, a physician first observes symptoms such as, for example, elevated temperature, loss of taste, or general malaise. Based on these observable signs, the physician formulates a diagnosis, identifying the illness as, say, a viral fever. Thus the symptoms are the initial indicators followed by a medical conclusion. However, from a pathological perspective, the underlying cause – the viral infection – precedes the symptomatic manifestation. The virus enters the body first; the symptoms such as fever and loss of taste occur later as the body responds. Diagnosis, by its very nature, involves identifying the root cause through an examination of symptoms.

Applying this analogy, the falldown of ISKCON's "*gurus*" is akin to the symptoms observed in a medical diagnosis. These symptoms pointed to a deeper issue, viz. the abandonment of the *ṛtvik* system established by Śrīla Prabhupāda. Therefore, the correct understanding is that

the *ṛtvik* system was not instituted as a reaction to these falldowns; rather the falldowns are themselves a reaction to the disobedience of Śrīla Prabhupāda's original instructions regarding the *ṛtvik* system.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Present-Day Falldowns of Bogus Gurus

Argument #11 (Amogh Līlā dāsa)

In the 1980s, these falldowns did, in fact, take place. Many *gurus* deviated from their positions, and their respective disciples were left deeply disappointed. However, all these falldowns were a natural consequence, because Śrīla Prabhupāda is an extraordinarily powerful *ācārya*. The moment his shelter is no longer present, weakness is bound to manifest. As soon as the *ācārya* departs, instability inevitably arises. In that turbulence, some devotees falter and fall down. So did these falldowns occur? Yes – undeniably so.

Response #11 (Tattvavit dāsa)

The phenomenon of "*guru*" falldowns is frequently associated with the 1980s; however, such incidents persist in the present day. For instance, Girirāja Svāmī was recently caught engaging in sexual activity within a temple room, directly in the presence of the Deities. Similarly,

Prabhāviṣṇu Svāmī experienced a falldown in 2011 or 2012, and Vipramukhya Svāmī's falldown was particularly grievous, involving sodomy with *gurukula* boys. Another case is that of BB Govinda Svāmī, who was observed performing a vulgar dance to a Bollywood song, wearing pant and shirt, during a disciple's wedding ceremony. Such behavior raises critical questions from our end. Furthermore, our visit to Russia, approximately one year prior to this publication, revealed that many "*gurus*" who are not direct disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda, but rather disciples of his disciples – and whose own "*gurus*" remain physically present – have also succumbed to temptations.

These incidents are not limited to the 1980s but continue even today. It is important to note that a falldown is not always sexual in nature; it also encompasses deviations such as adopting impersonalist philosophies, engaging in dry speculation, and communicating in ways inconsistent with Kṛṣṇa consciousness. One such example is the case of Rāmacandra Purī.

Amogh Līlā dāsa shamelessly argues that it was natural for the so-called *gurus* to have fallen in the 1980s, attributing it to the disappearance of Śrīla Prabhupāda's shelter following his departure. He suggests that some of these "*gurus*" became weak because they were in foreign

countries, lacking a conducive atmosphere for spiritual life – such as the lack of practice of *Sanātana-dharma* or the lack of proper association.

But how can such a serious matter be treated as something natural? What about the lives of the disciples who surrendered themselves to such individuals, singing daily "*sākṣād haritvena samasta-śāstrair*" – "The *guru* is as good as God?" If these people were regarded as God, then how did they fall? God is *acyuta*, or infallible. So how did these so-called *gurus* become *cyuta*, or fallen? If one is weak, then one is not a *guru*. One is *laghu*, or flimsy!

One must not call someone a *guru* if they cannot uphold the definition. Words have meaning – otherwise, why are there words? **To refer to someone as *guru* when they cannot live up to that standard is a misuse of language.** They are not *gurus*; they are *laghus*! This is the reality. And now, we shall consult *śāstra* to know who can truly fall down:

"The third-class person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness may fall down, but when one is in the second class he does not fall down, **and for the first-class person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness there is no chance of falling down**."

– *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* (9.3 Purport)

If someone is falling down, then it is to be understood that he is a third-class devotee.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Śāstric Qualifications of Guru

Response #11 (Tattvavit dāsa)

[Cont'd]

vāco vegaṁ manasaḥ krodha-vegaṁ
jihvā-vegam udaropastha-vegam
etān vegān yo viṣaheta dhīraḥ
sarvām apīmāṁ pṛthivīṁ sa śiṣyāt

"A sober person who can tolerate the urge to speak, the mind's demands, the actions of anger and the urges of the tongue, belly and genitals is qualified to make disciples all over the world."

– *The Nectar of Instruction* (Verse 1)

A person who is completely a *gosvāmī*, a controller of his senses, is qualified to become a *guru*.

"In the *Padma Purāṇa*, the characteristics of the *guru*, the bona fide spiritual master, have been described:

mahā-bhāgavata-śreṣṭho
brāhmaṇo vai gurur nṛṇām

sarveṣām eva lokānām
asau pūjyo yathā hariḥ

mahā-kula-prasūto 'pi
sarva-yajñeṣu dīkṣitaḥ
sahasra-śākhādhyāyī ca
na guruḥ syād avaiṣṇavaḥ

"**The *guru* must be situated on the topmost platform of devotional service.** There are three classes of devotees, and **the *guru* must be accepted from the topmost class**. The first-class devotee is the spiritual master for all kinds of people. It is said, *gurur nṛṇām*. The word *nṛṇām* means 'of all human beings.' The *guru* is not limited to a particular group. **It is stated in the *Upadeśāmṛta* of Rūpa Gosvāmī that a *guru* is a *gosvāmī*, a controller of the senses and the mind. Such a *guru* can accept disciples from all over the world.** *Pṛthivīṁ sa śiṣyāt*. This is the test of the *guru*."

– *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta: Madhya-līlā* (24.330 Purport)

tasmād guruṁ prapadyeta
jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam
śābde pare ca niṣṇātaṁ
brahmaṇy upaśamāśrayam

“Therefore, any person who seriously desires real happiness must seek a bona fide spiritual master and take shelter of him by initiation. The qualification of the bona fide guru is that he has realized the conclusions of the scriptures by deliberation and is able to convince others of these conclusions. Such great personalities, who have taken shelter of the Supreme Godhead, leaving aside all material considerations, should be understood to be bona fide spiritual masters.”

– *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.3.21)

In this verse, the term *upaśama-āśrayam* is translated by Śrīla Prabhupāda as “**fixed in detachment from material affairs**,” which implies that such a person will never return to material involvement. Therefore, anyone who is not situated on this topmost platform cannot be called a *guru*. Rather, he is a pretender.

We will now refer to an astounding conversation that highlights just how serious Śrīla Prabhupāda was about the qualifications of a genuine *guru*. Statements like those made by Amogh Līlā dāsa – “It is natural for a *guru* to fall down because they were weak, because they were no longer under Śrīla Prabhupāda’s shelter” – stand in direct contradiction to the actual facts. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta

Sarasvatī Ṭhākura also departed from this world, yet Śrīla Prabhupāda did not fall. Why? Because a bona fide *guru* never falls from his position:

Akṣayānanda: "I was recently told by one devotee that the *ācārya* does not have to be a pure devotee."

Prabhupāda: "What?"

Akṣayānanda: "That the *ācārya* does not have to be a pure devotee."

Prabhupāda: "**Who is that rascal?**"

Akṣayānanda: "Well, he said it, who said it."

Prabhupāda: "Who said? **Who is that rascal?** The *ācārya* does not require to be a pure devotee?"

Akṣayānanda: "He said it. Nitāi said it. He said it in this context – He said that Lord Brahmā is the *ācārya* in the Brahma-*sampradāya*, but yet he is sometimes afflicted by passion. So, therefore, he is saying that it appears that the *ācārya* does not have to be a pure devotee. So it does not seem right."

Prabhupāda: "**So who is that rascal?** I want to know who has said."

Akṣayānanda: "Nitāi. Nitāi dāsa."

Harikeśa: “Nitāi said that? [laughs in disbelief]”

Prabhupāda: “Who is Nitāi dāsa?”

Harikeśa: “Our Nitāi.”

Akṣayānanda: “Nitāi.”

Prabhupāda: “Oh, our Nitāi? Oh.”

Akṣayānanda: “He said he couldn’t understand it, but he thought..., he said that he thought...”

Prabhupāda: “He manufactured his idea. **Therefore, he’s a rascal. Therefore, he’s a rascal.** Nitāi has become an authority?”

Akṣayānanda: “No, actually he said that he thought...”

Prabhupāda: “**He thought something rascaldom, and he is expressing that. Therefore, he is more rascal.** These things are going on. As soon as he reads some books, he becomes an *ācārya*, whatever **rascal** he may be.”

Akṣayānanda: “So there’s no doubt that Lord Brahmā is a pure devotee?”

Prabhupāda: “Whatever he may be, he is *ācārya*. So you... Then Kṛṣṇa is also passionate. Kṛṣṇa is also passionate. Kṛṣṇa danced with so many *gopīs*; therefore He is passionate. They... These things are to be seen in this way,

that 'Such exalted person, he sometimes become passionate, so how much we shall be careful.' This is the **instruction**. Then we petty things, petty persons, how much we shall be careful. It is not that '*Ācārya* has become passionate, therefore I shall become passionate. I am strict followers of *ācārya*.' **These rascals say.**"

Hari-śauri: "So Lord Brahmā's being attracted to his daughter, that is just as an example..."

Prabhupāda: "So why you discuss this? Therefore, you shall be attracted with your daughter, mother? Do you think so, like that?"

Hari-śauri: "No."

Indian man: "In this world this is our disease. This is our disease."

Prabhupāda: "Yes. That disease... Brahmā... Lord Śiva also, he was attracted to the Mohinī. So they are *īśvara*. They are controllers. So the instruction is that even such personalities may be sexually attracted, so how much we shall remain careful. This is the instruction. [break] ...like the other **rascal**. Who was saying that 'Kṛṣṇa was killed by a hunter; therefore hunter is greater than Kṛṣṇa?'"

– Śrīla Prabhupāda's Morning Walk
Dec. 10, 1975 | Vṛndāvana

1. In ISKCON, they have an entire set of guidelines detailing the proper conduct of a *guru*, and they implement monitoring to enforce it. **A self-effulgent, pure devotee *guru* does not require such monitoring.**

2. Śrīla Prabhupāda's immediate response to the question posed at the beginning of this particular portion of the full conversation is, **"Who is that rascal?"** This is the standard – and this is the standard we recognize. It is the standard Śrīla Prabhupāda set for an *ācārya*. Note how many times Śrīla Prabhupāda rebukes Nitāi dāsa in this exchange: **ten times!** Especially striking is the moment when Śrīla Prabhupāda says, **"He thought something rascaldom, and he is expressing that. Therefore, he is more rascal."** **He doubled down on it.** Nitāi dāsa merely thought something foolish – already rascaldom. Then he verbalized it, disturbing others' minds – more rascal. "These things are going on," Śrīla Prabhupāda remarks. So do you think that the bona fide *ācārya* would appoint anyone who is not a pure devotee?

We would like to showcase another prominent falldown, because it is important that we thoroughly understand the subject matter:

ei ye śrī-mādhavendra śrīpāda upekṣā karila
sei aparādhe iṅhāra 'vāsanā' janmila

"Rāmacandra Purī was thus denounced by Mādhavendra Purī. Due to his offense, gradually material desire appeared within him."

PURPORT: "The word *vāsanā* ('material desires') refers to dry speculative knowledge. [...] **If one becomes an offender to his spiritual master or the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he falls down to the material platform to merely speculate.**"

– *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta: Antya-līlā* (8.26)
Verse + Purport

veda-vāda-rato na syān
na pāṣaṇḍī na haitukaḥ
śuṣka-vāda-vivāde na
kañcit pakṣaṁ samāśrayet

“A devotee should never engage in the fruitive rituals mentioned in the *karma-kāṇḍa* section of the *Vedas*, nor should he become atheistic, acting or speaking in opposition to Vedic injunctions. Similarly, he should never speak like a mere logician or skeptic or take any side whatsoever in useless arguments.”

– *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.18.30)

One should understand that the arguments we are presenting in response to the various statements of Amogh Līlā dāsa are not useless – they are now, in fact, deeply relevant to spiritual life.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Zero Tolerance For Guru Falldowns

Argument #12 (Amogh Līlā dāsa)

So if someone falls down – take, for example, you witness someone's falldown firsthand – what are you going to do? Make a huge commotion out of it? "Look, look! This person has fallen! Look, look!" Are we going to behave in this way, or will we try to pick him up and ask whether he has been spiritually wounded? We should care for the person who has fallen and offer the proper treatment. We should provide him with a solid support system. This is something to be done not only as a devotee but also simply as a human being. It is basic humanity.

Now consider the devotee who has rendered service for 30-40 years – he has found himself in a difficult situation, spiritually weakened, and has fallen from grace. But are we to dismiss all the service he rendered over those 30-40 years? And if he commits even a single mistake, are we going to make a great commotion out of it? At this point, you decide who is truly a devotee based on the two kinds of attitude described.

Response #12 (Tattvavit dāsa)

Well, what if a "*guru*" rapes a disciple? This is not to argue that a person who experiences failure is beyond compassion or rectification. However, a bona fide *guru* cannot fall down! If a person deviates from the standards of spiritual discipline, he is not qualified for occupying the position of *dīkṣā-guru*. There is zero tolerance for a "*guru*" to fall down.

A bona fide *guru* is not only capable of returning back to Godhead himself but is also empowered to elevate others who seriously adopt his instructions. Śrīla Prabhupāda explicitly stated, "Simply hold on to my *dhotī* and I will take you back home, back to Godhead." This reflects the extraordinary potency of a pure devotee. Not that, "I shall fall with you; I will slip and fall, so hold on to my *dhotī*."

If an individual is unable to sustain his personal spiritual standards as a devotee, he cannot function as a *guru*. By what capacity, then, is he to guide others? What becomes of the spiritual lives of those under his care? Are the lives of the disciples a joke? In such cases, the disciples' faith is shattered. Each morning, they recite "*sākṣād-haritvena samasta-śāstrair*" – "He is as good as God, my *guru*" – only to later discover that their so-called *guru* has embezzled funds, run away with a woman, identified as homosexual, or, even

worse, engaged in acts of pedophilia. These are not made-up scenarios. These are historical realities that have transpired within ISKCON.

The moment we disobey the order of the spiritual master is when we are finished. The position of *guru* is reserved exclusively for an *uttama-adhikārī*, and not just by virtue of personal qualification, but by explicit authorization. Without a direct order from Śrīla Prabhupāda, the claim to such a position is illegitimate.

Śrīla Prabhupāda issued a blanket order – the *ṛtvik* system – under which all prospective canditates are to become direct disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

The entire *guru* system presently operative within ISKCON is completely bogus. It is utter nonsense. Within this (defective) structure, there exists no assurance that the 2/3 vote-appointed "*guru*" is, in fact, a pure devotee. Such a figure may deviate from spiritual principles at any time. The risk to the disciple is perpetual and institutionally accepted. In the words of ISKCON's own (faulty) official "law" book:

"When the GBC allows a devotee to take up the service of initiating, **it does not thereby endorse him as an *uttama-adhikārī* or pure devotee, or certify his having achieved any specific state of realization**. Rather, the GBC indicates

that it has no objection to his initiating disciples within ISKCON."

– GBC Resolutions (No. 409, 2004)

There exists also, in this "law" book, codified procedures for addressing the eventuality of a "*guru*'s" moral or spiritual failure. It contains information regarding what actions to take when a "*guru*" falls down – including considerations on whether, or under what conditions, a fallen "*guru*" should *not* be rejected. The entire framework is atrocious.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, by contrast, demonstrated a completely uncompromising standard. At a single mention – when Nitāi dāsa stated, "The *guru* does not need to be a pure devotee" (an assertion that did not even reference falldown directly) – Śrīla Prabhupāda immediately issued a sharp rebuke, repeating **"rascal"** multiple times. **The word was used ten times!**

Yet in ISKCON today, such deviations are normalized. The prevailing rhetoric is that it is "natural," "understandable," or that "we should be compassionate" and "avoid criticism." But if this were the correct approach, why did Śrīla Prabhupāda so openly and repeatedly condemn such views?

As an example, consider Śrīla Prabhupāda's own circumstances: he was situated in the United States of America, surrounded by unfavorable conditions yet not deviating even an inch. That is the standard of a *guru*. If one falls down, he is not *guru*; he is *laghu*.

In contrast, the narrative within ISKCON often appeals to sympathy rather than principle. Amogh Līlā dāsa has said that, "After 30-40 years of service, if someone has fallen down, we should not ridicule them for just this one thing." Yet earlier, Amogh Līlā dāsa also poses to us the question, "After 40-50 years of service, is it still not enough for one to become a *guru*?" The contradiction here is clear.

Furthermore, such falldowns are rarely isolated incidents. They are often premeditated actions. In most cases, individuals are only exposed after repeated engagement in illicit activities. **Being caught is not the beginning of the falldown, but rather the public discovery of a long-standing fallen condition.**

Another rationalization that circulates within ISKCON is what may be termed the "thirteen-year-old mother" logic. In a lecture, an ISKCON devotee articulated this argument (paraphrased): "One of our *gurus* said, 'We ISKCON *gurus* are like thirteen-year-old mothers. At thirteen, she is still a

young girl who herself requires the care of her own mother, yet she has already become a mother. In the same way, we ISKCON *gurus* have accepted the responsibility of disciples, but we ourselves are immature and require the shelter of Śrīla Prabhupāda. Therefore, we are like 13-year-old mothers.'" In this way, these shameless fellows come up with materially concocted ideas.

One more analogy frequently employed by ISKCON is known as the "broken bus" analogy. The logic is as follows: "If one is traveling from point A to point B and the bus breaks down midway, what should one do? One does not lament over the broken bus; rather one simply boards the next bus and continues the journey. In the same way, if a *guru* falls down, it is like a broken bus – one should simply take shelter of another *guru* and proceed with one's spiritual advancement. There is no need to become overly despondent or emotionally shattered." This is ISKCON's idea of *guru*. But what does Śrīla Prabhupāda have to say about all this?

"When disciples do not stick to the principle of accepting the order of their spiritual master, immediately there are two opinions. Any opinion different from the opinion of the spiritual master is useless. **One cannot infiltrate materially concocted ideas into spiritual advancement.**

That is deviation. There is no scope for adjusting spiritual advancement to material ideas.”

– *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta: Ādi-līlā* (12.9 Purport)

Some time ago, an ISKCON devotee put forth the following argument to us: “It is alright. If the *guru* falls down, the *śiṣya* can help the *guru* – the disciple can take the *guru* back to Godhead.” If that is the case, then what is the need of a *guru* in the first place?

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Understanding Context

Response #12 (Tattvavit dāsa)

[Cont'd]

As a matter of fact, ISKCON surprisingly quotes the following part of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and then twists things completely out of context to support their nonsense ideas about *guru-tattva*. But we shall see what is what:

sa ca svarlokam ārokṣyan
sunītiṁ jananīṁ dhruvaḥ
anvasmarad agaṁ hitvā
dīnāṁ yāsye tri-viṣṭapam

iti vyavasitaṁ tasya
vyavasāya surottamau
darśayām āsatur devīṁ
puro yānena gacchatīm

"Dhruva was seated in the transcendental airplane, which was just about to start, when he remembered his poor mother, Sunīti. He thought to himself, 'How shall I go alone to the Vaikuṇṭha planet and leave behind my

poor mother?' The great associates of Vaikuṇṭhaloka, Nanda and Sunanda, could understand the mind of Dhruva Mahārāja, and thus they showed him that his mother, Sunīti, was going forward in another plane."

– *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (4.12.32-33)

We will now study the relevant Purport to understand everything in the right context:

"This incident proves that the *śikṣā-* or *dīkṣā-guru* who has a disciple who strongly executes devotional service like Dhruva Mahārāja can be carried by the disciple even though the instructor is not as advanced. Although Sunīti was an instructor to Dhruva Mahārāja, she could not go to the forest because she was a woman, nor could she execute austerities and penances as Dhruva Mahārāja did. Still, Dhruva Mahārāja was able to take his mother with him. Similarly, Prahlāda Mahārāja also delivered his atheistic father, Hiraṇyakaśipu. The conclusion is that a disciple or an offspring who is a very strong devotee can carry with him to Vaikuṇṭhaloka either his father, mother or *śikṣā-* or *dīkṣā-guru*. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura used to say, 'If I could perfectly deliver even one soul back home, back to Godhead, I would think my mission – propagating Kṛṣṇa consciousness – to be successful.' The Kṛṣṇa consciousness

Movement is spreading now all over the world, and sometimes I think that even though I am crippled in many ways, if one of my disciples becomes as strong as Dhruva Mahārāja, then he will be able to carry me with him to Vaikuṇṭhaloka."

– *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (4.12.33 Purport)

1. The *vartma-pradarśaka-guru* is the one who introduces people to Kṛṣṇa consciousness – the first to guide them to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Sunīti happens to be the *vartma-pradarśaka-guru* of Dhruva Mahārāja, so she was not as advanced as one may think. Even Prahlāda Mahārāja's father was an atheist, not a *dīkṣā-guru* of any sort. In these examples, the *gurus*, or superiors, who were delivered by inferiors, were not high-grade devotees.

2. "The Kṛṣṇa consciousness Movement is spreading now all over the world, and sometimes I think that even though I am crippled in many ways, if one of my disciples becomes as strong as Dhruva Mahārāja, then he will be able to carry me with him to Vaikuṇṭhaloka." Is there an example in *śāstra* which describes a *guru* being carried back home, back to Godhead by his own disciple? Now, we are not speaking of Sunīti, because she is just a *vartma-pradarśaka-guru*, not a *dīkṣā-guru*. The *dīkṣā-guru* of Dhruva Mahārāja

is Śrīla Nārada Muni, and Dhruva Mahārāja cannot take his spiritual master back to Godhead, because Śrīla Nārada Muni is already situated with Godhead. It is thus crucial to acknowledge that such statements by Śrīla Prabhupāda are a direct reflection of his pure humility. Although Śrīla Prabhupāda has mentioned even *śikṣā-* or *dīkṣā-guru* as examples, we should never take such statements as true, otherwise why would Śrīla Prabhupāda strongly reprimand the notion that the *ācārya* does not need to be a pure devotee?

3. Just as Śrīla Gaura-kiśora dāsa Bābājī once stated (paraphrased), “When I die, drag my body on the streets of Navadvīpa.” Upon his departure, some individuals actually arrived with the intention of dragging his body, but Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura intervened and said (paraphrased), “Out of humility he has said that, but we should know better – to instead fully honor the spiritual master’s spiritualized body.” Similarly, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu honored the body of Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura upon his departure. In the same spirit, we must render proper honor and not interpret the statements of Śrīla Prabhupāda in a superficial or literalistic manner. This is the proper understanding for a disciple.

4. There is a story that illustrates the importance of following instructions with contextual understanding. There was once a *guru* who had foolish disciples – strict followers, but foolishly strict. On one occasion, they were travelling with their Guru Mahārāja on a bullock cart. Their *guru* decided to take a short nap. As the journey progressed, the road became increasingly bumpy. Some items eventually fell off the cart. However, the disciples did not retrieve them; they simply continued onward. After some time, their Guru Mahārāja awoke and began looking for a particular item. “Where is the item I am looking for?” he asked. “It fell down, along with some other items,” the disciples replied. “Why did you all not pick them back up? So many of you were present. Did none of you notice?” “We all saw the objects fall from the cart.” “Then why did none of you decide to pick them up?” “We did not receive any order from you to do so. We are strictly order-followers.” “Okay...” The *guru* then made a list of all items currently on the bullock cart and instructed his disciples to pick up any of these items if or when they should fall. He then resumed his nap. As the road became even more uneven, it so happened that their *guru* himself fell off the cart while the disciples continued to drive it forward. The disciples consulted the list and, not finding their *guru*’s name

included, decided to continue on without him. Their Guru Mahārāja began shouting, “Hey! Hey! Hey! Pick me up! What are you doing? What are you doing?” “Oh,” they responded, “your name is not on the list.” The *guru*, now exasperated, thought to himself, “What kind of disciples do I have?” The key takeaway of this story is that one must understand the mood of the spiritual master in the proper way. When Śrīla Prabhupāda stated (paraphrased), “The *śiṣya* can deliver the *guru*,” some may hastily cite this to justify the disciple delivering the *guru*. But one must recognize that such statements are made from a position of humility, which is evident in the phrase, “even though I am crippled in many ways,” which in fact is not objectively true, for practically nothing is impossible for a *mahā-bhāgavata*.

So where in Vedic history is it ever shown that a *guru* has been delivered by their disciple? Superiors such as the father, as in the case of Prahlāda Mahārāja, or the mother, as in the case of Dhruva Mahārāja, are a different matter. But the *dīkṣā-guru* must be highly elevated – “*mahā-bhāgavata śreṣṭha*.” **He must be a first-class devotee.** The very first verse of *The Nectar of Instruction* declares:

vāco vegaṁ manasaḥ krodha-vegaṁ
jihvā-vegam udaropastha-vegam

etān vegān yo viṣaheta dhīraḥ
sarvām apīmāṁ pṛthivīṁ sa śiṣyāt

"A sober person who can tolerate the urge to speak, the mind's demands, the actions of anger and the urges of the tongue, belly and genitals is qualified to make disciples all over the world."

– *The Nectar of Instruction* (Verse 1)

So many erroneous, materially concocted philosophies are currently circulating within ISKCON. In fact, it has been very beautifully stated:

vipro rājanya-vaiśyau vā
hareḥ prāptāḥ padāntikam
śrautena janmanāthāpi
muhyanty āmnāya-vādinaḥ

"On the other hand, *brāhmaṇas*, members of the royal order and *vaiśyas*, even after being allowed to approach the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord Hari, by receiving the second birth of Vedic initiation, can become bewildered and adopt various materialistic philosophies."

– *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (4.12.33)

In ISKCON, everyone is permitted to approach the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord Śrī Hari, but unfortunately, they are adopting various materialistic philosophies. All these materially concocted ideas are being introduced into the process of spiritual advancement.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

The Great Deception

Argument #13 (Amogh Līlā dāsa)

[He names a few of the current prominent leaders of ISKCON] So such disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda are our most prominent leaders! But the *ṛtvik*s say, "We do not wish to acknowledge them. We will only focus on the negative examples which occurred in the 80s. The present bogus *guru* system in ISKCON is faulty! Just see how such and such *gurus* have fallen. So, therefore, we will never accept the *guru* system currently operative in ISKCON."

Response #13 (Tattvavit dāsa)

This is not a matter of judging good or bad examples. We employ a simple litmus test: if one is following Śrīla Prabhupāda's order, that is good. The moment one willfully disobeys, he is immediately fallen, regardless of who it is, however great he may be considered, or what services he may have rendered.

The only reason ISKCON continues to stand is because Śrīla Prabhupāda's books are still being distributed.

However, the core issue is that these books, when placed into the hands of sincere seekers of the Absolute Truth, are no longer leading them to Śrīla Prabhupāda himself. As previously mentioned, Śrīla Prabhupāda's books are being used as bait – initially attracting people, only to then redirect them toward surrendering to this or that *"guru."* At that point, the process of diluting the philosophy and misleading the disciple begins.

Amogh Līlā dāsa is a prominent preacher within ISKCON, yet how does he speak? His tone is marked by disrespectful intonations. One must ask: how powerful should such a person be in preaching? The manner in which he presents his arguments is utterly childish. His entire presentation is shallow and full of faults!

Later, he is found to have made an even more disturbing statement. We will address that shortly. It constitutes the most offensive argument in the entire debate – direct blasphemy of Śrīla Prabhupāda. This is the inevitable outcome when a person is thoroughly misled. And if this individual is counted among the leading figures in ISKCON, one can only imagine the nature of the rest of the lot. Sincere individuals are approaching us in good faith only to be introduced to preachers of this nature – and what do they learn? How to blaspheme Śrīla Prabhupāda.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Approaching The Authorized Current Link

Argument #14 (Amogh Līlā dāsa)

The *ṛtvik* system which is followed by our opponents basically jumps over the current generation of *gurus* and attempts to take *dīkṣā* from Śrīla Prabhupāda. "The current generation of '*gurus*' are useless, so we will jump over them and approach Śrīla Prabhupāda for initiation," say the *ṛtvik* representatives. Well, why only jump as far as Śrīla Prabhupāda? Why not jump even further to his own spiritual master for *dīkṣā* and consider Śrīla Prabhupāda a godbrother? And why only Śrīla Prabhupāda's Guru Mahārāja? Let us go further to the level of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. And even further they wish to go – to take initiation from Īśvara Purī, the spiritual master of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, so that they can treat Lord Caitanya as their godbrother! It sounds very strange, does it not? Actually, it *is* strange, which is why we also *feel* that it is strange. It is nonsensical, which is why it even *feels* nonsensical. So can we really skip the current generation of *gurus* and go further than them in the disciplic succession?

Well, no! That is so offensive and full of arrogance! There is so much pride, arrogance, and haughtiness in this method of approach. “No, we’ll take initiation from *gurus* further up the disciplic succession.” Then take it directly from Lord Kṛṣṇa! If the *ṛtvik* proponents want to make a jump at all, why do they not make bigger jumps?

Response #14 (Tattvavit dāsa)

Of course, one should never bypass the *guru-paramparā* system, and to do so is certainly disrespectful. One must indeed approach the current link – but the *authorized* current link. However, the current link is not necessarily physically present. We will now present full evidence for this, but before doing so, let us first provide a quotation to establish a basis for our upcoming arguments:

> “As already stated, Brahmā is the original spiritual master for the universe, and since he was initiated by the Lord Himself, the message of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is coming down by disciplic succession, and in order to receive the real message of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* **one should approach the current link, or spiritual master, in the chain of disciplic succession**.”
>
> – *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.9.7 Purport)

Now, does the current link always refer to a living *dīkṣā-guru*? No. The first piece of evidence we present appears in the Purport to the verse immediately following the one just cited:

"His [Lord Brahmā] acceptance of the sound was due to his pure vision of the absolute nature of the Lord. And **due to his correct vision, he made no distinction between the Lord and the Lord's instruction. There is no difference between the Lord and sound vibration coming from Him, even though He is not personally present.** The best way of understanding is to accept such divine instruction, and Brahmā, the prime spiritual master of everyone, is the living example of this process of receiving transcendental knowledge. **The potency of transcendental sound is never minimized because the vibrator is apparently absent. Therefore, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* or *Bhagavad-gītā* or any revealed scripture in the world is never to be accepted as an ordinary mundane sound without transcendental potency.**"

– *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.9.8 Purport)

In the Purport to the previous verse, Śrīla Prabhupāda refers to the concept of a current link. In the Purport to the verse immediately following, Śrīla Prabhupāda states that it

is the instruction one must follow, even if the vibrator is apparently absent. If the transcendental sound is present, its potency is never diminished. This implies that the current link does not require physical or personal presence. Otherwise, what precisely does the term "current link" signify? Consider Lord Brahmā, for example – our *sampradāya-ācārya* – who received instructions from his spiritual master, Lord Viṣṇu, whom he could not see. Similarly, Prahlāda Mahārāja received instructions from Śrīla Nārada Muni while still in the womb of his mother, despite not being able to see him.

The *guru* is always present. One may naturally raise the argument: "No, Śrīla Nārada Muni was physically present with Prahlāda Mahārāja's mother, and Lord Viṣṇu was also physically present, though Lord Brahmā could not see Him!"

In actuality, Śrīla Prabhupāda is also still personally present. In his instructions, he is fully present. Śrīla Prabhupāda emphatically declares:

"I shall live for my books, and you will utilize."

– Press Conference Coversation with Śrīla Prabhupāda
Jul. 16, 1975 | San Francisco

"**'I shall never die,'** Śrīla Prabhupāda once said. **'I shall live forever in my books.'** He passed away from this world on November 14, 1977, but **surely he will live forever.**"

– *The Science of Self-Realization* (Foreword)

We may be unable to see Śrīla Prabhupāda, but he is fully present in his books. He is simply unmanifest to our eyes. He is present just as much as Lord Kṛṣṇa is present, though unmanifest to our vision.

Do you think Lord Kṛṣṇa is not present all around us as Supersoul? When we translate "*sākṣād-haritvena samasta-śāstrair*," can we not understand, by this statement, that Śrīla Prabhupāda is also – like the Lord – fully present in his teachings?

Therefore, we should understand this properly: the current link does not always refer to a physically present *guru*. Even if he is apparently absent, if the vibration is there, we should understand that the vibration is completely nondifferent from the *guru*.

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
imaṁ vivasvate yogaṁ
proktavān aham avyayam
vivasvān manave prāha

manur ikṣvākave 'bravīt

"*śrī-bhagavān uvāca*—the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *imam*—this; *vivasvate*—unto the sun-god; *yogam*—the science of one's relationship to the Supreme; ***proktavān*—instructed;** *aham*—I; *avyayam*—imperishable; *vivasvān*—Vivasvān (the sun-god's name); *manave*—unto the father of mankind (of the name Vaivasvata); ***prāha*—told;** *manuḥ*—the father of mankind; *ikṣvākave*—unto King Ikṣvāku; ***abravīt*—said.**"

"The Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, said: I *instructed* this imperishable science of *yoga* to the sun-god, Vivasvān, and Vivasvān *instructed* it to Manu, the father of mankind, and Manu in turn *instructed* it to Ikṣvāku."

– *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* (4.1)

Now, even though the disciples may have seen their *gurus*, as observed in the above-cited verse, the main point mentioned repeatedly – **three times** – in the verse is the word "**instructed**." The essential principle is to accept the instructions.

This demonstrates that instruction can also be accepted from an advanced *śikṣā-guru* when the *dīkṣā-guru* is not physically present.

evaṁ paramparā-prāptam
imaṁ rājarṣayo viduḥ
sa kāleneha mahatā
yogo naṣṭaḥ paran-tapa

"This supreme science was thus received through the chain of disciplic succession, and the saintly kings understood it in that way. But in course of time the succession was broken, and therefore the science as it is appears to be lost."

– *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* (4.2)

So when the science is lost, that is when the succession is said to be broken. Otherwise, it is not broken. The science is present with us as it is, in the form of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books:

Lokanātha: ...five thousand years back, until now, there's only thirty *ācāryas*...

Prabhupāda: **"Chain is broken when there are false spiritual masters. Otherwise, it is not broken. Chain is**

broken if a so-called spiritual master speaks something manufactured. Then the chain is broken. Otherwise, chain is not broken."

– Śrīla Prabhupāda's Morning Walk
Sep. 2, 1976 | New Delhi

In fact, the so-called *gurus* within ISKCON are authoring publications in which the philosophical substance has been significantly watered down. A considerable number of these works exhibit traces of Māyāvāda influence, and there is a conspicuous absence of meaningful glorification of Śrīla Prabhupāda and the holy names within their texts. Śrīla Prabhupāda is frequently presented by such unauthorized men as merely one among various other so-called saints, *yogīs* and mystics. Such books, often promoted by ISKCON as bestsellers, are philosophically distorted. Śrīla Prabhupāda himself never composed works of this nature.

His books continue to preach to millions of individuals across the globe. Even today, when someone becomes a devotee, it is important to examine how such transformation occurs – by reading Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. That is the actual catalyst converting individuals into devotees.

Moreover, there is historical precedent for our position, as evidenced by a Morning Walk conversation previously cited. Even the disciplic relationship between Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura and his disciple, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, reveals an approximate two-hundred-year gap. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura rendered service to Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura and Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura accepted that service:

"The direct disciple of Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī was Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, who **accepted** Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī as his servitor."

– *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta: Ādi-līlā* (Chapter 1, Summary)

So how did Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura *accept* (a verb; action) the service *after* he had physically departed?

We harbor no pride or arrogance. The *laghus* in ISKCON unauthorizedly occupy the position of Śrīla Prabhupāda and attempt to usurp the entire mission of the Kṛṣṇa Consciousness Movement. *That* is pride.

We, on the other hand, are genuinely endeavoring to manifest real humility within us by accepting the instructions so kindly given by Śrīla Prabhupāda. We have thus successfully established the truth that His Divine Grace

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda is the authorized current link.

CHAPTER TWENTY

Amogh Līlā dāsa Contradicts Himself

Argument #15 (Amogh Līlā dāsa)

If, for fifty years, someone chants the holy names of the Lord and preaches the message of *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, is such a person still not eligible to become a spiritual master? So this is, in some way, a question mark – a challenge – by *ṛtvik*s to the science of *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. And this is, in some way, a challenge to the effect of the holy name of the Lord. After so much chanting and preaching, they are not qualified for the post of *guru*? Does this logically make any sense? Absolutely not!

Response #15 (Tattvavit dāsa)

Earlier, Amogh Līlā dāsa remarked (paraphrased), "After 30-40 years, a *guru* became weak and fell down. But we should never discount his thirty years of service. The *guru* should still be helped." So does this mean that after 30-40 years of service one can still fall down, yet those 30-40 years already qualify one to become a *guru*? What sort of reasoning is this?

That duration of service does not in itself qualify one to occupy the position of *guru*. One may certainly act as a *śikṣā-guru* and offer valuable guidance to others. What is the difficulty in that? For hundreds of years, one can preach and serve as a *śikṣā-guru*. Why, then, the insistence upon assuming the role of *dīkṣā-guru*? Śrīla Prabhupāda is already the *dīkṣā-guru*.

Amogh Līlā dāsa also raises this question: "If, for fifty years, someone chants the holy names of the Lord and preaches the message of *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, is such a person still not eligible to become a spiritual master?" Once again, the same misunderstanding resurfaces. Previously, Amogh Līlā dāsa asserted, "Oh, Śrīla Prabhupāda could not make even one person a pure devotee; one *dīkṣā-guru*?" But again, the issue is not the potency of the scriptures, the *guru* or the holy name. Rather, it concerns the fertility of the disciple – how receptive and qualified *they* are. The outcome ultimately depends on the disciple:

"The *ācārya* can give you hints that 'You can be saved in this way.' **But the execution of the duties, that is in your hand. If you perform the spiritual duties rightly, then you are saved. Otherwise, even *ācārya* gives you instruction, if you don't follow, so how he can save you?**

He can save you by instruction, by his mercy, as much as possible. But you have to take it in your hands seriously."

– Śrīla Prabhupāda's Lecture
Bhagavad-gītā As It Is (1.26-27) | Jul. 21, 1973 | London

Śrīla Prabhupāda also explains that the *guru* is like the leading bird in a formation flight. In the evenings, one can observe this phenomenon: the leading bird flies at the front, and all the other birds align behind, following its course. Wherever the leading bird directs the formation, the others follow accordingly. However, the birds trailing behind must also flap their wings. It is not that, "The leading bird is flying ahead, so I can simply rest." No. One must exert effort – flap one's wings – and follow the path shown. The *guru* shows the way, being fully potent to guide us back to Godhead, but unless we ourselves actively adhere to the instructions of the spiritual master, how can we expect to be delivered?

To illustrate: if we are trapped in a deep, dark well, and someone (strong and capable) lowers a long rope to rescue us, the potential for deliverance is certainly there. But if we do not properly and firmly grasp the rope, how can the rescuer possibly pull us up? That is the principle. Thus we cannot place the blame on the *guru*, the scriptures or the holy name, nor doubt their potency. Our doubt is not in

these sources. We have doubt on these people in ISKCON who are claiming to be *guru* while actually being *laghu*. They have not properly undertaken the process. They are offending Śrīla Prabhupāda; and if one is engaged in *guru-aparādha*, what mercy will they ever receive of becoming spiritually empowered and capable of delivering others?

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

Amogh Līlā dāsa Offends Śrīla Prabhupāda

Argument #16 (Amogh Līlā dāsa)

In ISKCON's current *guru* system, the *guru* has the ability to accept or reject a disciple if they approach him for initiation. If the candidate does not qualify for initiation, the *guru* can instruct the disciple to try again another time, perhaps in another year. In the *ṛtvik* system, however, there is no possibility for a verbal acceptance or rejection by the *guru*, because Śrīla Prabhupāda, as the *dīkṣā-guru* in this system, is situated as a *mūrti*. In *ṛtvik* initiation ceremonies, the form of this *mūrti* is given the list, saying: "From today onwards, this is your disciple. Would you like to say something? Would you like to say something?" How will he say anything – he is merely a *mūrti*! [evil laughter] How will he say anything? So, actually, if we try to see things from the correct angle, the *ṛtvik* system is illogical, because the *guru* has no option – no say – in whether or not to accept or reject a candidate. So who makes all the decisions? The *ṛtvik* representative.

Response #16 (Tattvavit dāsa)

"Rascal" is, in fact, far too mild a term with which to address Amogh Līlā dāsa. We are speaking here of Śrīla Prabhupāda – the Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness – who has repeatedly and unequivocally affirmed his continued presence through both his *mūrti* and his transcendental instructions. Yet the current members of ISKCON appear to disregard these authoritative declarations entirely.

"**Next you ask if I am present in my picture and form? Yes. In form as well as in teachings.** To carry out the teachings of *guru* is more important than to worship the form, **but none of them should be neglected.** Form is called *vapu* and teachings is called *vāṇi*. **Both should be worshiped. *Vāṇi* is more important than *vapu*.**"

– Śrīla Prabhupāda's Letter to Tuṣṭa Kṛṣṇa Svāmī
Dec. 14, 1972 | Ahmedabad, India

Day after day, they perform *guru-pūjā* before his *mūrti*, and yet statements such as the one in question are made with no sense of respect. The offending clip in which this blasphemy can be witnessed – exceedingly brief at twelve seconds – was strategically trimmed and removed. The

entire video was re-uploaded thereafter, clearly indicating post-publication damage control. Nevertheless, we possess the original version of the clip.

But even if this individual wishes to categorize Śrīla Prabhupāda merely as a "predecessor *ācārya*" and not his current "*guru*" – is this the proper way to speak of predecessor *ācāryas*? By that same logic, should we also doubt the presence of Lord Kṛṣṇa in His *vigraha* form? Is He not accepting one's foodstuff as offerings? Has Amogh Līlā dāsa not heard of the pastime of Sākṣi-gopāla, wherein the Lord not only spoke but also physically walked?

Even if one feels personally unqualified to serve the Deity, it must be understood beyond all ambiguity: Śrīla Prabhupāda is fully present – not only in his *vigraha* form, but especially in his recorded teachings. That this individual fails to grasp such a fundamental truth is shocking. The gravity of the offense committed here is severe. The arrogance required to speak in such a tone, in reference to such a personality, is staggering. And one must ask: how did the original version of the video pass through ISKCON's editorial review process and reach the public domain in the first place? Only after considerable backlash from devotees – both within and beyond ISKCON – was the problematic

segment removed. But initially, it was published without giving it any thought.

One cannot help but question the internal systems at work. Who sanctions such content? That someone could utter such words is already appalling; but that they would edit, approve, and broadcast them with confidence across social media platforms is almost inconceivable. What level of offense is required to speak this way about Śrīla Prabhupāda? Amogh Līlā dāsa, evidently, has no strength of *sādhana* or integrity, and his actions expose a frightening lack of understanding, if not outright contempt, for the *ācārya* who distributed the mercy of Lord Caitanya. That someone would even entertain such a thought – let alone voice it publicly – is deeply disturbing.

And returning to the oft-repeated point that Śrīla Prabhupāda "no longer has a say" in the matter – this is demonstrably false, even on historical grounds. During his physically manifest presence, Śrīla Prabhupāda explicitly delegated the responsibility of initiating disciples to his *ṛtvik* representatives. They were not required to consult him on every case, nor was he obliged to even be informed of who was becoming a disciple and who was not. Of course, the spiritual connection remained fully intact, but administratively, Śrīla Prabhupāda had withdrawn himself

from the decision-making process altogether regarding individual candidates. He vested this authority in the *ṛtvik* representatives, who were instructed to rely upon the recommendation of the temple president. These were the persons making the determination as to a candidate's qualification.

Even when Śrīla Prabhupāda was directly assigning names, he simply accepted the recommendations of temple presidents. He was not personally inspecting or evaluating each candidate. The entire process as it functions now is identical in structure and delegation. So what is the difference between then and now?

We are expected to believe that the current ISKCON "*gurus*" are somehow performing more thorough checks than Śrīla Prabhupāda himself? That is not happening. In present-day ISKCON, the same pattern continues: temple presidents continue to recommend candidates, often without any personal involvement from the initiating "*gurus.*" Indeed, it is common knowledge that many ISKCON "*gurus*" have their own *ṛtvik* representatives who chant on the beads on their behalf. This is a well-documented practice. Jayapatākā Svāmī, for example, employs *ṛtvik* representatives under him to manage the practical aspects

of initiation. One must ask: how could he personally chant on the beads for the thousands of disciples he initiates?

It is, therefore, evident that he does not personally know the majority of his so-called disciples. The actual checking – if one can even call it that – is outsourced. So again, even within the current (bogus) ISKCON system, where and when is this supposed "rigorous scrutiny" actually taking place?

The arguments advanced against Śrīla Prabhupāda's *ṛtvik* system are tremendously shallow. Now we turn to *śāstra* to educate the masses in the proper way:

yasya sākṣād bhagavati
jñāna-dīpa-prade gurau
martyāsad-dhīḥ śrutaṁ tasya
sarvaṁ kuñjara-śaucavat

"The spiritual master should be considered to be directly the Supreme Lord because he gives transcendental knowledge for enlightenment. Consequently, for one who maintains the material conception that the spiritual master is an ordinary human being, everything is frustrated. His enlightenment and his Vedic studies and knowledge are like the bathing of an elephant."

– *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (7.15.26)

In the Purport to the verse immediately following the one just now quoted, it is stated as follows:

"**The spiritual master is as good as the Supreme Personality of Godhead**, and therefore one who is very serious about spiritual advancement **must** regard the spiritual master in this way. **Even a slight deviation from this understanding can create disaster in the disciple's Vedic studies and austerities.**"

– *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (7.15.27 Purport)

mahatāṁ bahu-mānena
dīnānām anukampayā
maitryā caivātma-tulyeṣu
yamena niyamena ca

"The pure devotee should execute devotional service by giving the greatest respect to the spiritual master and the *ācāryas*. He should be compassionate to the poor and make friendship with persons who are his equals, but all his activities should be executed under regulation and with control of the senses."

– *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.29.17)

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

Amogh Līlā dāsa Narrates Fiction

Argument #17 (Amogh Līlā dāsa)

There was a devotee named Rādhā Ramaṇa Mahārāja who wished to receive initiation from Śrīla Prabhupāda. However, Śrīla Prabhupāda instructed him to accept initiation from Rādhā Govinda Svāmī. Subsequently, Rādhā Ramaṇa Mahārāja did, in fact, take initiation from Rādhā Govinda Svāmī. This directive was explicitly given by Śrīla Prabhupāda himself. So, in this condition of Śrīla Prabhupāda, did something like this ever happen, even during his last days, that he instructed someone to take initiation from one of his disciples? The answer is a big, resounding “Yes!”

Response #17 (Tattvavit dāsa)

There is no credible source for this occurrence at all. There exists no recorded conversation and no written correspondence; nothing whatsoever. Śrīla Prabhupāda instituted the July 9, 1977 letter to all GBCs and temple presidents. When he issued such an unequivocal directive to the entire society, is it conceivable that he simultaneously

made some alternate arrangement? Certainly not, because such a decision would have only introduced confusion. The instruction was explicit, and Śrīla Prabhupāda consistently operated with that degree of clarity.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

The Behavior of Sincere Disciples

Argument #18 (Amogh Līlā dāsa)

I, Amogh Līlā dāsa, along with many other devotees engaged in preaching work, derive our strength to spread the message far and wide from ISKCON's current *guru* system. This system empowers countless devotees across the globe. Among these many personalities, I, Amogh Līlā dāsa, am an insignificant one. If the *guru* system we follow were not authentic, then what would be the source of our strength? How could we engage in preaching without it? Without the empowerment provided by ISKCON's *guru* system, our efforts would be reduced to unintelligible sounds – "Ugabagababagabagababagagagababaga" – lacking any meaningful substance.

Response #18 (Tattvavit dāsa)

Firstly, it is not, in truth, a *guru* system – it is a *laghu* system. It is a very flimsy system, and that is precisely why he has arrived at such a degraded position – offending Śrīla Prabhupāda in the most horrendous manner. And now his offense is on full display. Observe: his entire mode of

argumentation lacks gravity, the kind of weight or seriousness that one naturally expects from a spiritually advanced personality. It is, in fact, an excessively irritating style of speaking.

There is good reason behind Arjuna asking Lord Kṛṣṇa the following question:

arjuna uvāca
sthita-prajñasya kā bhāṣā
samādhi-sthasya keśava
sthita-dhīḥ kiṁ prabhāṣeta
kim āsīta vrajeta kim

“Arjuna said: O Kṛṣṇa, what are the symptoms of one whose consciousness is thus merged in transcendence? How does he speak, and what is his language? How does he sit, and how does he walk?”

– *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* (2.54)

Arjuna is asking these questions – why? Because there is a method, a mannerism, in which one must conduct themself. We feel very sorry that Amogh Līlā dāsa does not fit that mold.

"**Most important is how the man in Kṛṣṇa consciousness speaks; for speech is the most important quality of any man.** It is said that a fool is undiscovered as long as he does not speak, and certainly a well-dressed fool cannot be identified unless he speaks, but as soon as he speaks, he reveals himself at once. **The immediate symptom of a Kṛṣṇa conscious man is that he speaks only of Kṛṣṇa and of matters relating to Him.**"

– *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* (2.54 Purport)

One must speak only of matters not merely related to Lord Kṛṣṇa, but those related *favorably* to Him – *ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu-śīlanaṁ* – not unfavorably. Otherwise, Kaṁsa, too, was Kṛṣṇa conscious, constantly thinking of Lord Kṛṣṇa, but in an inimical way. A devotee, by contrast, always speaks of Lord Kṛṣṇa in a favorable mood. And this principle does not apply to the Lord alone – it also applies to His pure devotees. One must speak favorably about pure devotees such as Śrīla Prabhupāda. To vilify such exalted personalities is entirely outside the bounds of devotional culture. There is a proper way for devotees to speak, and that standard is glaringly absent in the conduct of Amogh Līlā dāsa. We are confident that any sane individual would agree with us on this particular point.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

Methods May Vary; Goal Is One

Argument #19 (Amogh Līlā dāsa)

Is there any documented letter in which Śrīla Prabhupāda explicitly appoints a successor as the next *dīkṣā-guru*? Obviously not. No such letter exists. But interestingly, if we pose another question based on the same principle – whether Śrīla Prabhupāda himself received any letter from his own spiritual master explicitly appointing him as a *dīkṣā-guru* – the response remains the same: no such document is extant.

Response #19 (Tattvavit dāsa)

Indian man (1): "When did you began to become the spiritual leader of Kṛṣṇa consciousness?"

Prabhupāda: "What is that?"

Brahmānanda: "He's asking when did you become the spiritual leader of Kṛṣṇa consciousness?"

Prabhupāda: "**When my *Guru* Mahārāja ordered me. This is the *guru*-paramparā.**"

Indian man (1): "Did he just…"

Prabhupāda: "Try to understand. Don't go very speedily. **A *guru* can become *guru* when he's ordered by his *guru*. That's all. Otherwise nobody can become *guru*.**"

[...]

Indian man (1): "When did he tell you to...?"

Prabhupāda: "What is the business, when did he tell me? And why shall I disclose to you? It is so very insignificant thing that I have to explain to you?"

Indian man (1): "No, I am just curious to know when."

Prabhupāda: "You should be curious within your limit. **You should know that one can become *guru* when he is ordered by his *guru*.** This much."

– Q&A Session of Śrīla Prabhupāda's Lecture
Bhagavad-gītā As It Is (7.2) | Oct. 28, 1975 | Nairobi

In the above conversation, Śrīla Prabhupāda emphatically declares that he was indeed ordered by his Guru Mahārāja; however it is not the prerogative of the conditioned soul to scrutinize the precise time, manner, or context in which that divine instruction was received. Śrīla Prabhupāda subsequently instituted the *ṛtvik* system through a formal letter of authorization. It must be recognized that not all *ācāryas* will necessarily establish the

future administrative or initiatory frameworks of their missions identically. Different spiritual masters may adopt different strategies based on the exigencies of their time, their audience and their vision for the perpetuation of the respective *sampradāya*.

For example, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura is noted to have instructed (paraphrased), “Form a Governing Body Commission (GBC) and work cooperatively.” **Śrīla Prabhupāda further notes that his Guru Mahārāja declared that a self-effulgent *ācārya* would eventually emerge, who would naturally assume the position of leadership. That was the model envisaged by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura.**

Śrīla Prabhupāda, however, instituted a structurally distinct yet spiritually consistent approach. He issued an unambiguous directive to implement the *ṛtvik* system of initiations. Even if, in the future, an individual were to attain the qualifications of a pure devotee, such a person could (and should) still function within the *ṛtvik* system – taking shelter of Śrīla Prabhupāda by immersing himself in his transcendental teachings, thereby ensuring authentic spiritual advancement and ultimate perfection.

Moreover, this process holds when situated under the guidance of genuine *śikṣā-gurus* who are fixed in fidelity to Śrīla Prabhupāda. The legitimacy and continuity of this system, therefore, stand on firm theological and historical foundations, without presenting any contradiction whatsoever.

This is actually very nicely explained by Śrīla Prabhupāda in the following way:

"As an ideal *ācārya*, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu **devised ways** to capture all kinds of atheists and materialists. **Every *ācārya* has a specific means of propagating his spiritual Movement with the aim of bringing men to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Therefore, the method of one *ācārya* may be different from that of another, but the ultimate goal is never neglected.**"

– *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta: Ādi-līlā* (7.37 Purport)

Thus for the deliverance of conditioned souls in this age of quarrel and hypocrisy, the *ṛtvik* system stands as Śrīla Prabhupāda's causeless mercy – one that safeguards the spiritual lives of everyone in the Movement. **No disciple should ever have to live in doubt or anxiety, perpetually**

burdened by the looming fear that their initiating "*guru*" might fall from grace at any moment.

tāhā dekhi' mahāprabhu karena cintana
jagat ḍubāite āmi kariluṅ yatana

keha keha eḍāila, pratijñā ha-ila bhaṅga
tā-sabā ḍubaite pātiba kichu raṅga

"*tāhā dekhi*'—observing this advancement; *mahāprabhu*—Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu; *karena*—does; *cintana*—thinking; *jagat*—the whole world; *ḍubāite*—to drown; *āmi*—I; *kariluṅ*—endeavored; *yatana*—attempts; *keha keha*—some of them; *eḍāila*—escaped; *pratijñā*—promise; *ha-ila*—became; *bhaṅga*—broken; *tā-sabā*—all of them; *ḍubāite*—to make them drown; *pātiba*—shall devise; *kichu*—some; ***raṅga*—trick**."

"Seeing that the Māyāvādīs and others were fleeing, Lord Caitanya thought, 'I wanted everyone to be immersed in this inundation of love of Godhead, but some of them have escaped. Therefore, I shall devise a trick to drown them also.'"

PURPORT: "Here is an important point. Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu wanted to invent a way to capture the

Māyāvādīs and others who did not take interest in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness Movement. This is the symptom of an *ācārya*. **An *ācārya* who comes for the service of the Lord cannot be expected to conform to a stereotype, for he must find the ways and means by which Kṛṣṇa consciousness may be spread.** [...] Therefore, what we are doing is perfect by the grace of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, **for it is He who proposed to invent a way to capture those who strayed from Kṛṣṇa consciousness.**"

– *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta: Ādi-līlā* (7.31-32)
Verse + Purport

In a similar manner, to extend his mercy and to deliver the conditioned souls of the future, Śrīla Prabhupāda established the *ṛtvik* system of initiation – an act of extraordinary compassion. Recognizing the challenges of Kali-yuga and the dire need for an accessible and stable connection to the disciplic succession, he made it possible for countless souls to receive his shelter, even after his physical departure.

prabhu kahe, – īśvara haya parama svatantra
īśvarera kṛpā nahe veda-paratantra

"Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said, 'Both the Supreme Personality of Godhead and My spiritual master, Īśvara Purī, are completely independent. Therefore, neither the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead nor that of Īśvara Purī is subject to any Vedic rules and regulations.'"

– Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta: Madhya-līlā (10.137)

The mercy of the *ācārya* is not bound by any Vedic rules and regulations. Yet some members of ISKCON claim, "The *ṛtvik* system of initiation is *apa-siddhānta* as it is not an established conclusion." However, the *ṛtvik* system does not need to conform to their notion of *siddhānta*, nor does it violate any genuine scriptural injunctions.

In the ultimate issue, the duty of the spiritual master is to impart transcendental knowledge and guide the disciple back home, back to Godhead. The *ṛtvik* system fulfills this function completely, so it is neither a deviation nor an invention; it is a practical expression of the *ācārya*'s mercy.

To say it is not "traditional" and is "something invented" misses the point. The mercy of Lord Kṛṣṇa and His empowered representative is not restrained by precedent –

it operates on the principle of compassion and not on rigid formalities:

"In answer to this question, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu replied that **His spiritual master, Īśvara Purī, was so empowered that he was as good as the Supreme Personality of Godhead.** As such, Īśvara Purī was the spiritual master of the whole world. **He was not a servant of any mundane rule or regulation. An empowered spiritual master like Īśvara Purī can bestow his mercy upon anyone, irrespective of caste or creed.** The conclusion is that **an empowered spiritual master is authorized by Kṛṣṇa and his own *guru* and should therefore be considered as good as the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself.** That is the verdict of Viśvanātha Cakravartī: *sākṣād-dharitvena*. **An authorized spiritual master is as good as Hari, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As Hari is free to act as He likes, the empowered spiritual master is also free. As Hari is not subject to mundane rules and regulations, the spiritual master empowered by Him is also not subject.** According to the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Antya-līlā* 7.11), *kṛṣṇa-śakti vinā nahe tāra pravartana*. **An authorized spiritual master empowered by Kṛṣṇa can spread the glories of the holy name of the Lord, for he has power of**

attorney from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In the mundane world, anyone possessing his master's power of attorney can act on behalf of his master. **Similarly, a spiritual master empowered by Kṛṣṇa through his own bona fide spiritual master should be considered as good as the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself.** That is the meaning of *sākṣād-dharitvena*."

– *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta: Madhya-līlā* (10.136 Purport)

Four times it has been repeated that the bona fide *ācārya* is authorized directly by Lord Kṛṣṇa through their own spiritual master. If we are unable to grasp such a basic theological truth, then we are absolute fools! Our sole responsibility is to faithfully execute his instructions without deviation or doubt; not to question it.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

Inadequate Qualifications of Guru

Argument #20 (Amogh Līlā dāsa)

Any disciple who is nice and capable automatically attains the status of a *guru*, having been empowered by their own spiritual master. “This is a very nice disciple of mine. I shall empower him. Blessings! Continue the disciplic succession and spread the Movement even further!” So this is actually an automatic process.

Response #20 (Tattvavit dāsa)

What is this nonsense? To begin with – “Blessings!” What does that even mean? There is no real grace here. Śrīla Prabhupāda is referred to as *His Divine Grace*, and senior devotees are addressed as *His Grace*. But this individual is a disgrace. Just observe his demeanor. “Blessings!” – as if it were some frivolous token. Blessings are sacred. *Dharma-saṁsthāpana* or the mission of the Supreme Lord is enacted by sending pure devotees like Śrīla Prabhupāda, situated firmly in the *paramparā* system of *ācāryas*. And here, Amogh Līlā dāsa is treating the entire matter like a joke. He is making a mockery of it.

There is not a shred of seriousness in his presentation. The entire tone is completely dismissive. This is nothing short of sheer rascaldom. This is not how one discusses such a heavy subject. One must possess *gurutva* – spiritual weight and depth – when speaking on *guru-tattva*. But instead, we hear only flimsiness and superficiality. The arguments presented by Amogh Līlā dāsa are of the same nature as garbage.

And then the absurdity: "A capable disciple, a nice student – he automatically becomes a *guru*, being empowered by his own *guru*." Automatically? Really? Śrīla Prabhupāda has explicitly stated, in writing and in speech, again and again, that **the *guru* must be authorized by Lord Kṛṣṇa through his own spiritual master.** We have just reviewed these very quotes. Add to this the conversation cited at the beginning of our previous response.

To become a *guru* demands both qualification and authorization. But the members of ISKCON today have no grasp of *guru-tattva*. They are misconstruing everything!

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

Offensive Speculations by Amogh Līlā dāsa

Argument #21 (Amogh Līlā dāsa)

How, then, has this *ṛtvik* system – a fundamentally incorrect system – persisted for such an extended period? Given that this system is not valid following Śrīla Prabhupāda's physical departure, why has it continued to endure until the present day? The answer lies in the nature of Kali-yuga; during this age, disorder and decline prevail. In this age, anything goes.

Response #21 (Tattvavit dāsa)

While this may initially appear to be a trivial comment, it is, in fact, quite offensive. The only way the people of this Kali-yuga can be saved is through the *ṛtvik* system – by taking shelter of Śrīla Prabhupāda to return to the spiritual world. What does "In this age, anything goes" mean? Yes, everything is deteriorating under the influence of Kali, but the *ṛtvik* system is the only thing that is right in this age. And yet, this individual dares to claim that the *ṛtvik* system is a

product of Kali-yuga? It is actually meant to save people from the influence of Kali by securing their future from the torment of this age. Śrīla Prabhupāda personally used the word "*ṛtvik*" and carefully established this system. And now we have individuals like Amogh Līlā dāsa, who not only insult Śrīla Prabhupāda but also offend him by ridiculing the very system he put in place.

"Oh, but it has never been done before." Never done before? Then why do we accept the chanting of sixteen rounds of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* – *hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare/ hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare* – when all the previous *ācāryas* and their disciples in the *paramparā* chanted at least sixty-four rounds daily? That *was* the standard, but Śrīla Prabhupāda, out of his extraordinary mercy and deep understanding of the fallen condition of people in Kali-yuga, reduced the requirement to sixteen rounds to make the process easier for us. So if we accept that authorized adjustment, instituted directly by Śrīla Prabhupāda for the deliverance of countless individuals, why is there such a stubborn objection to following the *ṛtvik* system?

svayaṁ samuttīrya sudustaraṁ dyuman
bhavārṇavaṁ bhīmam adabhra-sauhṛdāḥ

bhavat-padāmbhoruha-nāvam atra te
nidhāya yātāḥ sad-anugraho bhavān

"O Lord, who resemble the shining sun, You are always ready to fulfill the desire of Your devotee, and therefore You are known as a desire tree [*vāñchā-kalpataru*]. When *ācāryas* completely take shelter under Your lotus feet in order to cross the fierce ocean of nescience, they leave behind on earth the method by which they cross, and because You are very merciful to Your other devotees, You accept this method to help them."

– *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.2.31)

God accepts the method the *ācārya* wishes to leave behind on Earth to deliver his disciples. It is further stated in the Purport of this verse:

"Thus it is the duty of the *ācārya* to publish books that will help future candidates take up the method of service and become eligible to return home, back to Godhead, by the mercy of the Lord. In our Kṛṣṇa Consciousness Movement, this same path is being prescribed and followed. Thus the devotees have been advised to refrain from four sinful activities – illicit sex, intoxication, meat-eating and gambling

– and to chant sixteen rounds a day. These are bona fide instructions.”

– *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.2.31 Purport)

Śrīla Prabhupāda mentions the chanting of sixteen rounds a day as a bona fide instruction. How is it bona fide – considering that prior to Śrīla Prabhupāda, the standard was sixty-four rounds? This instruction is also not traditional, so why accept the 16-round rule? Because it is convenient. **If the sixteen-round rule is bona fide, then the order to follow the *ṛtvik* system of initiation is also bona fide.** It does not need to have precedence. The principle has not changed. The principle is the transfer of spiritual knowledge from the heart of the *guru* to the heart of the disciple. This is *dīkṣā*, and it is happening by simply reading Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books. There is nothing that is coming in the way of it just because the vibrator of that knowledge is apparently absent.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

Final Remarks

Final Remarks (Amogh Līlā dāsa)

We offer many resources available for download and study on this subject. Through these materials, one can clearly discern that *ṛtvik-māyāvāda*, or *ṛtvikvāda*, is actually not the real philosophy – that is, the claim that the disciplic succession ceased entirely following Śrīla Prabhupāda's departure and that no *dīkṣā-guru* emerged thereafter. Evidently, this is not the case. The *guru-paramparā* continues by the merciful grace of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Final Remarks (Tattvavit dāsa)

Likening the *ṛtvik* system to Māyāvāda philosophy is simply unacceptable. Śrīla Prabhupāda appeared in this world specifically to rescue humanity from the influence of impersonalism, and it is with that same spirit of compassion that he instituted the *ṛtvik* system – to ensure that countless conditioned souls in the future be protected from Māyāvāda contamination. To refer to the *ṛtvik* system in the manner that Amogh Līlā dāsa has is sheer ignorance.

The current system within ISKCON has become deeply compromised. False *gurus* peddle the narrative that the *ṛtvik* representatives of Śrīla Prabhupāda are misguided, yet they offer not a single piece of concrete evidence to support such a position. In contrast, we at ISKM have compiled a robust and extensive body of documentation on this subject. We encourage you to equip yourself with all the arguments from there and in this way become saved from the ongoing cheating propagated by ISKCON's current leadership.

We sincerely pray to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and Śrīla Prabhupāda to endow Amogh Līlā dāsa with good intelligence, because the path he has embarked upon is fraught with grave spiritual danger. We earnestly hope he comes to understand the gravity of this issue.

To you, the thoughtful reader, we extend our deepest and most sincere thanks for your valuable time, patient attention, and willingness to reflect deeply on this most important subject. Your openness to carefully consider these points means more than words can fully express.

All glories to the ṛtvik system of initiation!
All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda!

ISKM presents a definitive *śāstric* analysis of one of the most misunderstood topics within Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism. With scholarly precision and spiritual conviction, this work dismantles the misconceptions surrounding the post-1977 system of initiations instituted by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

Far from a polemic, this volume is a measured theological treatise grounded in scripture, supported by logic and fortified by Śrīla Prabhupāda's own recorded words. It exposes how philosophical dilution has obscured the original order of the Founder-*Ācārya* and restores the clarity of his intent: that the mercy of the bona fide spiritual master transcends time, form and even physical presence.

Each argument unfolds with surgical rigor, interweaving the brilliance of *śāstric* reasoning with the urgency of reform. Written in a style both lucid and uncompromising, **"*Ṛtvik*, yes."** stands as a monumental rebuttal to decades of theological confusion.

> "No disciple should ever have to live in doubt or anxiety, perpetually burdened by the looming fear that their initiating 'guru' might fall from grace at any moment."
>
> – pg. 131